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THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

ITS RISE, ITS GROWTH, AND ITS FALL

(421 to 1797)

By W. CAREW HAZLITT

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THE late Mr. Carew Hazlitt's volumes are the most complete history in English of the once great and famous Venetian Republic. In 1860 the author brought out a book which was recognized as the standard work on the subject, but by 1900 such vast stores of additional information had been made accessible, that an entirely new edition was published in two volumes. This in turn took its place as the standard work on the subject, and has continued so to this day.

The author, however, was never content with past achievements, but went on with his study and research into the history of the great Eastern Republic, and had for many years been arranging and editing his fresh material in readiness for a new edition. In accordance with his expressed wishes, his daughter, Miss Hazlitt, and Mr. Alfred E. Thiselton (the Executors) have prepared and issued this edition.

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VENICE

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CROSSING THE PIAZZA OF ST. MARK

VENICE

BY LONSDALE AND LAURA RAGG : : : : ILLUSTRATED BY MORTIMER MENPES

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TO

OUR VENETIAN FRIENDS

OF 1905–1909,

LIVING AND DEPARTED:

AND TO

ITALY OUR ALLY

PREFACE

THE letterpress in this volume lays no claim to high originality or deep research. Available books have been freely laid under contribution, some of them familiar to all; some less accessible. And the writers trust that they have, as far as in them lies, given due acknowledgment to those from whom they have borrowed facts, thoughts, or phrases.

To Messrs. Seeley, Service & Co. thanks are due for permission to incorporate almost bodily what the authors had already published in the chapter on "Venetian Fasts and Festivals" in *Things seen in Venice.*

The experience of several years' residence in Venice may have enabled them to focus some familiar objects in a fresh way: and this is indeed the ground of hope on which they venture to

throw themselves upon the gentle reader's consideration.

At the moment when these lines go to press, the dethroned Queen of the Adriatic is once more face to face with the barbarian; with the self-constituted successors of those Huns, from whose pitiless assaults the far-off ancestors of some still existent Venetian families sought refuge in the Lagoon. Her treasures are hidden away, her "decks cleared for action." God grant to her and to the young Italy whose life she shares, an issue worthy of her most glorious past.

L. R
L. M. R.

The names on the title-page of this book follow the conventional order of Man and Wife; and it may be a congenial task for the Modern Critic, when he has finished his well-deserved strictures on the book as a whole, to assign its parts to their several sources. But the writer whose name has conventional precedence cannot let the work go forth without protesting that if there is anything of value in the volume, be it in style or in matter, the genuinely successful Critic will trace the bulk of it to the pen of the author whose name is put second, who is also responsible for more than her fair share of the labour involved. *Suum cuique.*

L. R.

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ST. MARK'S PIAZZA

VENICE

CHAPTER I

THE SESTIERI

"Prima di ogni altra cosa, convien sapere che questa Città vien divisa in sei Sestieri."

THE above quotation occurs in the Preface to a certain guide-book published in the eighteenth century, under the comprehensive title of *Forestiere Illuminato intorno Le Cose Più Rare e Curiose Antiche e Moderne Della Città di Venezia e Dell' Isole Circonvicine.*

The book, valuable to us on account of its engravings and its descriptions of buildings since demolished or transformed, was deservedly popular in its day, though we doubt whether any stranger ever obeyed, with entire docility, the pious cicerone who spared him never a church nor a relic. We do not intend in this respect to follow the footsteps or example of the *Guida*, yet we would adopt his

method of grouping the principal sights of Venice within their ancient boundaries; and we shall make the sections of this chapter conterminous with those of the city. The *forestiere,* moreover, will find that it is necessary not only for his "illumination," but for his everyday comfort, that he realise "that this City is divided into six *Sestieri*" and thirty parishes.

Suppose, for example, that he had business with a Venetian whose entrance door is in a *calle* called "Del Traghetto." There are in the city at least six *calli* bearing that name, therefore in directing his gondolier he must add, as *differentia,* the name of the parish. Should he wish to make an appointment by writing, he must further know the number of the house; and since all numbers have reference to the entire division of the city, he must also remember to what Sestiere his Calle del Traghetto belongs. The full and secure address will then run like this:

Al pregmo Signore X.Y.Z., Calle del Traghetto, S. Barnaba, 2791 Sestiere Dorsoduro.

The Venetian *parocchia* is not merely a convenient ecclesiastical and municipal expression with

reality only for the parish priest; it is a small *imperium in imperio*, a self-contained, self-supplying entity with marked individual characteristics. In its *campo*, once the church meadow, or in the *calle* round the corner, all the necessaries of life may be procured. There is the baker who sells bread of various kinds, shapes, and shades; there is a picturesque stall of fruit and vegetables; a retailer of many sorts of pulse and *pasta*; and a vendor of salt, tobacco, cigarettes, and postage stamps (Government monopolies). There is a *trattoria* or two, and of course a barber — for few Italians shave themselves — and a bureau of gossip is essential to the social life of the parish. There is a *droghiere* or *spezier* (French *épicier*) who deals in spices, tea, coffee, soap, and candles, and who is now only a nodding acquaintance of the *farmacista* — the "chemist and druggist" — though centuries ago he was his own guild-brother. The *Farmacia* is to the Borghesia all, and more than all, that the wine-shop is to the Popolino. It is the club-room of a coterie of intimates, the meeting-place of neighbours whose forefathers for generations have used it for the

same purpose. Its aspect is quite unlike that of an English pharmacy. It is neat, with the spacious bareness which differentiates Italian houses from our own overcrowded dwellings: its few patent medicines are concealed in cupboards, and its shelves are decorated with rows of *faience* jars which nowadays are becoming mere trade symbols—like the huge colour-bottles of an English apothecary—partly because they are too valuable for daily handling, partly because Dame Fashion rules the physician as well as the tailor, and the drugs — notably the famous *triaca* or "Venice treacle"—are now *démodés*.

If each parish has its individuality, still more has each Sestiere. We are assuming, like the eighteenth-century *Guida*, that the stranger, desirous of "illumination," will do much of his sight-seeing on foot;[1] for not only will he see many priceless bits of architecture—a wall-sculpture, an almost hidden shrine, a lovely *cortile*, or a well-head discernible through gates ajar—not only will he obtain picturesque glimpses of the habits of the

[1] To the *forestiere* so minded, we would heartily recommend *Venice on Foot*, by the late Colonel H. Douglas (Methuen, 1907, 5s. net), a treasury of accurate information and of sound common sense.

ON THE GRAND CANAL

Popolani, invisible to those who only leave their gondola at the Riva of church or gallery; but he will seize through every sense that inexplicable, indefinable thing which the French call "l'âme du pays." And the Sestiere is the *pays* of its inhabitants, even more emphatically than the *contrada* of other Italian cities. It represents a more absolute division, born of differences of origin, perpetuated with interest by geographical bars to communication. The modern service of *vaporetti* along the Grand Canal, touching all the Sestieri in turn, is effacing ancient exclusiveness, but the ghosts of old enmities still walk now and then, for example, at regattas. The Venetian dialect is spoken with noticeable differences in the various Sestieri, and the man in the street will still excuse a betrayal of strange topographical ignorance with the remark, "I am from another Sestiere, Signore."

We shall not, like the *Guida*, plunge at once into the heart of Venice, since the Sestiere of San Marco, containing the Piazza and the Ducal Church and Palace, must have a chapter to itself. We will begin instead with the division second, surely,

to it in importance, for it includes the Arsenal and the ancient Cathedral. It embraces an island lying at its north-east corner, formerly called Olivolo, either from its olive shape or from the olive trees which grew there. On this island, in very early days, there stood a castle (*castello*), which lent and left its name to the entire Sestiere.

I

Sestiere di Castello

The Sestiere begins on the south side at the Ponte della Paglia, where the barges laden with hay used to unload. Crossing it we are on the Riva degli Schiavoni, where lived the Dalmatian sailors who manned the Venetian galleons. It is now a broad quay of unpolished marble, though up till the end of the eighteenth century it was only a narrow *fondamenta*, from which projected a quay, the chief landing-stage of the city. Though less bustling to-day, it is still the favourite promenade of the proletariate, and one of the noisiest spots in Venice by day and by night. On the site of the present prison there was, in the fourteenth century, a well-known inn kept by

A QUIET WATERWAY

an Englishman. Just beyond the Hotel Danieli, formerly Palazzo Bernardo-Nani, a little archway leads to the Church of San Zaccaria. Close to this spot, in 837, the Doge Pietro Tradonico was murdered. In consequence of the ill-luck associated with this approach, later Doges who visited the convent every year, as a mark of gratitude to the nuns who had renounced their garden for the public good (see p. 71), invariably went by another route, the Via SS. Filippo e Giacomo. The nave of the church is Byzantine, the choir Gothic, the façade Renaissance and extremely beautiful. Here are the tombs of many of the early Doges, and several noteworthy pictures, the *chef-d'œuvre* being the lovely Gian Bellini, painted when the master was seventy-nine years of age.

San Zaccaria is connected with two other churches in the vicinity by a gracious tradition recorded by Doge Andrea Dandolo:

Bishop Magnus of Altinum, visiting the early refugees and exhorting them to thankfulness for their escape from the barbarians, had a vision of the Virgin, very beautiful, who bade him build a church in her honour where he should see a

white cloud rest, and he built the church since known as "Santa Maria Formosa." And again there appeared to him St. John the Baptist, and commanded him to build two churches close together, one to be called by his own name, the other by that of his father, and these are San Zaccaria and San Giovanni in Bragora—"St. John in the Marsh." The latter is worth visiting for the sake of a lovely Madonna and Child by Bellini, and an incomparable Cima—the Baptism of Christ, with a background taken from the painter's native Conegliano. The church where the white cloud rested contains the well-known Santa Barbara of Palma Vecchio, the portrait of Violante, the painter's daughter beloved by Titian. It was painted for the *bombardieri* (gunners), whose Scuola (guild-hall) was at the Ponte delle Bande close by.

Close to the Campiello of Santa Maria Formosa is a sixteenth-century palace, open to the public on Thursdays and Sundays, but seldom visited by casual *forestieri* in Venice. The Palazzo Querini-Stampalia was bequeathed with all its contents to the Government by its last possessor, Giovanni

PALACE IN A BY-CANAL

Querini, who died in 1867. There, as some maintain, lived the originals of Othello and Desdemona, the Moor being a certain dark Querini commonly called "Il Moro," and Desdemona his cousin Palma.[1] The palace contains a good library, to which properly accredited readers are admitted, and the furniture and decoration of the rooms and a collection of seventeenth-century engravings are extraordinarily interesting.

The third Rio which breaks through the Quay of the Slavonians leads to their Scuola, or Sacred Hall, decorated by Carpaccio with a series of matchless pictures. The paintings, designed for an earlier building, are not in the light or the sequence in which the painter placed them; nevertheless the little dark room, "about the size of the commercial parlour of an English inn," is for lovers of Venetian art and Venetian history one of the most interesting spots in Venice. The pictures have been elaborately, and sometimes, we venture to think, erroneously explained by Ruskin; every good guide-book to Venice contains an account of them, while Molmenti's standard work on Carpaccio

[1] For another identification of the *dramatis personae*, see p. 143.

deals with them in detail. Here we would only recommend the *forestiere* to note a few of the points in which the painter reproduces with minute fidelity the social life of his day.

In The Call of St. Matthew we see the costume and environment of a sixteenth-century money-changer (*campsor*). In the background is the gate-house to a walled city, the like of which may still be seen in the Veneto. In the foreground to the left we have a glimpse of the counting-house, its walls hung with a dado of tapestry, above which are labelled drawers. Over these is a bit of furniture which figures in many old inventories, a *restello* or narrow shelf studded with pegs from which files of paper hang. In front of the entrance to the counting-house is a projecting table handsomely carpeted, and on it lies a banker's money-scoop.

The picture of St. Jerome and his Lion not only shows us a typical Venetian convent garden—into which two palm trees are introduced to give the desired Eastern touch—but also the main features of the Hospital of St. Catharine, the original meeting-place of the Slavonian Confra-

FISHING BOATS FROM CHIOGGIA

ternity, with the neighbouring church of the Knights of Malta.

The picture of St. Jerome in his Study reproduces with all the accuracy of a photograph and the minuteness of an inventory the perfectly appointed room of a Venetian patrician. The Saint sits at a table raised above the chill *terrazza* floor, on a carpeted platform. Richly bound clasped books are spread around him, and by his side is a hand-bell and a shell, known as a *porcella da lissar* ("burnishing-pig"), for smoothing out erasures in parchment. Deeds with big seals lie at his feet with open Missals, the musical score of which has been transcribed by Signor Cristofoli of St. Mark's. An orrery hangs above him. On the opposite wall above the green arras is a cornice—the *soaze* of Venetian inventories—on which are placed an astronomical sphere and various *objets d'art.* Above this again is a shelf full of folio volumes with wooden covers. The flat pale grey walls bring into splendid contrast the richly painted and gilded beams of the ceiling. In the end wall there are two doors, one ajar and revealing a small inner room. Between them in a niche is an altar, and

underneath it a cupboard, the open doors of which disclose an incense boat, cruet, and alb, while the silken curtain is ready to hand to form a frontal when mass is said. These last-mentioned features mark the apartment as one of the oratories so much in vogue among the magnates of the sixteenth century that their number had to be limited by law, lest the Parish Churches should be emptied.

We must not, however, linger in fifteenth-century Venice, but must make our way along the Riva to a nineteenth-century creation, the Public Gardens.[1] They are not very interesting nor very much frequented, though at the hour of sunset they borrow glamour from the scintillating lagoon. Of late years they have been the scene of summer exhibitions of modern art, temporary pavilions being erected for the purpose. On foot one approaches them by the broadest street in Venice, the Via Garibaldi, which will lead us on to the *fondamenta* of Sant' Anna (so called from the sometime convent,

[1] The Giardini Pubblici were made by Napoleon in 1807. The churches and convents of the Capuchin nuns, of S. Domenico, of S. Nicolo di Bari, and of S. Antonio Abbate, were demolished to make room for them.

OSPEDALE CIVILE

now a naval hospital), at the end of which a ferry takes us across to the island of Castello.

The church of San Pietro in Castello, once the cathedral of Venice, was the scene of the celebrated Rape of the Brides, who, with their bridegrooms and dower chests, were snatched away by pirates secreted in the church. They were followed and rescued by the Casselari ("case-makers") of Santa Maria Formosa, to whom special privileges were for ever after granted. The church contains a fine picture by Basaiti, St. Peter between four saints.

From Castello we quickly reach the Arsenal with its lion-guarded gates—the object, of old as again to-day, of attack on the one hand and of special vigilance on the other. The walls, two miles in extent, and flanked with fourteen towers, were formerly guarded by sentinels night and day, and one of the Provveditori dell' Arsenale was obliged to remain an entire fortnight within its enclosure. All three Provveditori left their homes during their term of office, thirty-two months, and dwelt in the vicinity in official houses significantly nicknamed Paradiso, Purgatorio, and Inferno! The Arsenal contains an armoury and museum of much

interest, where the *forestiere* may easily call up for himself a vision of proud new galleys beating out to sea,[1] and all the ceaseless smoky labour which Dante saw and sang. North of the Arsenal and close to the Fondamente Nuove is the great church of the Minorites, San Francesco della Vigna, built, so the legend goes, in the vineyard where St. Mark, storm-stayed on the Rialtine Islands on his way to Alexandria, was saluted by an angel with the words, familiar to us as motto to the Arms of the Venetian Republic: "PAX TIBI MARCE EVANGELISTA MEUS." The fourteenth-century church which replaced the still older San Marco della Vigna was rebuilt by Sansovino, with modifications and a façade by Palladio. A beautiful, though much repainted, Madonna by the Paduan master Negroponte deserves special notice.

On foot, by devious *calli*, in gondola coasting the Fondamente Nuove, we reach the remarkable line of ecclesiastical buildings on the east side of the Rio dei Mendicanti, which have now passed into civil hands.

[1] On the *Navy of Venice*, the most complete work in English is that published recently by John Murray, from the pen of the Hon. Alethea Wiel (15s. net).

SCUOLA DI SAN MARCO

The Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo is now a national monument. The Municipal Hospital has absorbed (*a*) the Scuola di San Marco, built by Lombardi for the premier Confraternity of Venice, (*b*) the Capella di Pace in the atrium of which was buried the disgraced and decapitated Doge Marino Falier, (*c*) the Church and Hospital of San Lazzaro dei Mendicanti, and (*d*) the Dominican Monastery of SS. Giovanni e Paolo. The church of this convent, "Zanipolo" as it is called in dialect, was the most important church in Venice after St. Mark's. The funeral service of the Doges was always performed here, and here many illustrious Venetians rest. It is called by the guide-books "The Westminster Abbey of Venice," and as such it ranks among the chief sights of the city. To describe it in detail would be beyond the scope of this book and the limits of this chapter. We shall only draw the attention of the *forestiere* to the simple tomb on the left of the entrance, carved with doves and angels. It is the resting-place of the first founder, Doge Giacomo Tiepolo, and recalls the vision which inspired his gift. The Dominicans had an oratory on this marshy spot dedicated—for Venice has a

predilection for Old Testament heroes—to San Daniele; and the pious Doge beheld in his dream this little building covered with red roses, above which hovered white doves (the Dominican symbol) and two censer-swinging angels, while a voice went forth, "This is the spot I have chosen for my preachers." The dream was easily interpreted and the Doge was pious; and so, while the church of their rivals, the Franciscans, was rising on the further side of the Canalazzo, the Dominicans saw San Zanipolo come into being in the Sestiere of Castello. It was not, however, completed and consecrated till two centuries later, in 1430, when it was dedicated to the Roman soldier-martyrs John and Paul.

Close by, there stood, up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Scuola of St. Ursula, for which Vittore Carpaccio painted the interesting cycle of pictures telling the virgin-martyr's story, now in the Accademia.

In front of San Zanipolo is the glorious work of Verocchio and Alessandro Leopardi, the famous statue of that most typical of Italian Condottieri, Bartolommeo Colleoni.

TENEMENTS IN A QUIET STREET

The opposite side of the Rio dei Mendicanti is in the

II

Sestiere di Cannaregio.

A bridge, crossing the "Beggars' Canal" a little south of the Colleoni statue, conducts to a *calle* which leads direct to a wonderfully perfect specimen of early Renaissance architecture, the small aisleless Church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli. Exquisite in decoration and proportion both within and without, it was built in the short space of eight years by Pietro Lombardi to receive a miraculous picture of the Madonna. The pious donors of the church, the Amadi family, also gave over their house to certain Franciscan sisters; and the entrance *cortile* close by, where we see the Amadi arms, has ever since borne the name of "Corte delle Muneghe" (*monache*, nuns).

From here we may conveniently visit the Church of San Giovanni Grisostomo (St. John Chrysostom), and having seen the Bellini, declared by Ruskin the most beautiful in Venice, we must needs pass to the back of the church to glance at a certain twelfth-century palace with a beautiful Gothic

window—once the home of the famous traveller Marco Polo, whose sobriquet "Dei Millioni" is still preserved in the name of the little entrance court, the Corte dei Millioni.

Retracing our steps northward up a long, straight *calle*, we reach the Square, the Bridge, and the Church of San Canciano. The church, now completely modernised, was founded by the early fugitives from Aquileja; the bridge was the starting-place of the old Traghetto to Murano. Crossing the bridge we advance towards the Church of the Holy Apostles. On our right we pass the palace of the unfortunate Doge Marino Falier, whose tomb we saw in SS. Giovanni e Paolo; on our left, in Calle Dolfin, is a curious monument of ancient trades-unionism—an inscription put up by the *Pistori* threatening, with dire penalties, any non-unionist bread-vendors. The other side of the stone, facing the Rio, warns gondoliers not to carry such blacklegs or their goods. The SS. Apostoli was one of the series of churches "built to order" by St. Magnus, and was erected, so the legend goes, on the spot where he saw twelve cranes gathered.

S. MARIA DELLA MISERICORDIA

It was completely rebuilt in the eighteenth century, except the chapel of the famous Corner family, where lie the father and brother of Catharine Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus.

At the north-west corner of the *campo* starts one of the broadest streets in Venice, the modernised Corso Vittorio Emmanuele, which takes us past the Giovanelli Palace, renowned for its collection of pictures,[1] and the *campo* and Church of Santa Fosca. The church is uninteresting, but the little square contains a statue, and the neighbourhood is pervaded with memories of that remarkable personality Paolo Sarpi.

If we would avoid perplexities and many enquiries as to the *diretta via*, we shall now retrace our steps to the Rio San Felice or Noal, and turning down the Calle del Traghetto we shall hire a gondola from the rank on the Grand Canal. We shall then row up the Rio to the wide opening formed by the junction of this with the other San Felice Canal, and presently shall see, branching to the left, the Rio della Sensa and the abbey church

[1] Especially the Giorgione, a picture beautiful in itself and notable in the evolution of landscape painting.

and monastery of the Misericordia, with an exquisite Gothic gateway opening on to its narrow *fondamenta.* Beyond the Abbazia is a bridge, *fondamenta, campo,* and *calle* called "Dei Mori." On one of the houses here (No. 3399) is an inscription recording that Tintoret lived, worked, and died within; on another (they were originally one) are three Moorish figures, of which the last was the Pasquino of Venice. In his mouth denunciations were placed, and green youths were sent with messages or letters of introduction to Ser Antonio Robia. He was in reality the last of the Mastelli family who gave to the neighbourhood their nickname "Mori," and took it (so it is said) from their *pays d'origine,* the Morea; though the spirited bit of carving which adorns the northern side of their palace, representing a Moor leading a camel, tells against the tradition.

This front of the Mastelli Palace looks across the Rio della Madonna dell' Orto to a church which owed its re-dedication (its original patron was St. Christopher) to the discovery of a rude statue of the Virgin in a garden (*orto*) near at hand. The church is best visited in an afternoon light. Tin-

A FAMOUS PALAZZO

toret and his fair and gifted daughter Marietta, painter, singer, and musician, are buried in this church; but their resting-place is unmarked. Here is Jacopo's "Last Judgment," elaborately described by Ruskin (*Modern Painters*, vol. ii.). Here, too, is a "Presentation of the Virgin" by some ascribed to his son Domenico, which, in spite of repainting, remains wonderfully beautiful and touching. The St. Vincent of Palma Vecchio has a refinement and dignity almost unexampled in that painter's work. But the picture which is perhaps, after all, worthy of most attention is the *chef-d'œuvre* of Cima—the Baptist between SS. Mark and Peter, SS. Jerome and Paul, with its lovely background and foreground. To the right of the Cima now hangs the "Madonna and Child" by Bellini, with a background of gilded leather which we used to find in the fifth chapel, and beneath it is a notice of its robbery from the church and its recovery in 1909.[1]

[1] The robber was a temporary *custode*, who, in Holy Week 1909 replaced the old devoted guardian of the church. During the days when the pictures were veiled the theft was accomplished and undiscovered, and in spite of the post-paschal exertions of police and art-dealers and lovers, no clue as to its whereabouts was obtained. After a long interval the *custode* of a certain institution of charity asked the keeper of the modern art gallery in Palazzo Pesaro if he could find an English purchaser for an old picture in his possession. The Pesaro keeper was suspicious,

Turning the prow of our gondola we glide past the Palazzo Contarini dal Zaffo—where once lived the gifted Cardinal Contarini, friend of our Cardinal Pole[1]—into the *Sacca* or Bay of the Misericordia. It is full of timber, water-borne from Friuli to this fair haven.

And now we will push out into the lagoon and bid our gondolier pause a while, that we may enjoy and understand the scene spread round us.

Directly facing us across an expanse of shallow, shimmering water is the long wall, fencing in the cemetery, on the island of San Michele. East of it we get a curious vision of sails moving through the air, their hulls and the sea hidden by the intercepting Lido; west of it is the smoke-cloud hanging over the glass-furnaces of Murano, and farther off, again, the dark-fringed line of the mainland. Above and beyond it in early mornings or clear, still evenings hangs sometimes like a mirage the whole snow-crested line of the Alps.

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and an elaborate comedy was arranged, the leading rôle, that of Milord Inglese, being assumed by a well-known *antiquario*. A bargain was concluded, a false cheque exhibited, and a *caparra* (earnest money) of 500 lire in coin was paid. The vendor went off exulting to a café, where later in the evening he was arrested.

[1] Horatio Brown, *Venetian Studies*: "Contarini and his Friends."

TIMBER BOATS FROM THE SHORES OF THE ADRIATIC

Facing landwards we notice to our left the stone quays built in the sixteenth century, but still called New. From these Fondamente Nuove start the steamers plying between Venice, Murano, and Torcello. This is now one of the most decayed and least populated parts of Venice, though in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries its salubrity and freedom from plague made it a favourite place of residence. Two or three gardens on the opposite side of the Misericordia Sacca, stretching to the lagoon from the palaces on the Rio Madonna dell' Orto, recall for us the aspect of the whole of this side of Venice in the days when Titian lived there. His house must now be sought for in unsavoury slums which have shut it out from its incomparable view of the lagoon, and eaten up the garden where on warm nights his friends were wont to gather.

At the corner of the lovely formal garden of the Palazzo dal Zaffo[1] we notice a small white solitary house looking out to Murano. It is known as the Casa degli Spiriti, and is one of the singularly few dwellings in this city of old houses and old families

[1] Now the property of Mr. Humphreys Johnston and restored with great taste and skill. Its site was occupied by a Roman villa, and Roman remains have been found in digging the garden.

which has the character of being haunted. An uncanny echo in house and garden perhaps originated and certainly enhanced its sinister reputation.[1]

Coasting along this outmost edge of Venice, we at length reach the canal which was once its main entrance, and which gives a title to this Sestieri; though it is not clear whether that title is derived from the reeds, *canne*, which grew profusely on the banks, or whether it is a Venetian corruption of *canale regio*, the "Royal Canal." Till the middle of the nineteenth century the traveller from the north, when he reached Mestre, was compelled to exchange the jolting of wheels for the easy motion of gondola or *burchiello*, and his *strada maestra*[2] was henceforth a rippling course marked by dark posts rising from a waste of water, until at length he swept into the outermost of its untrodden streets, "without sound of post-horn or rattle of toll-bar."

[1] See Horatio Brown, *Life in the Lagoons*, for a very gruesome ghost-story. It was probably built as a casino or garden-house by the Contarini, but seems to have been alienated from the property and put to mean uses. It was at one time a resting-stage for the dead on their last journey to S. Michele; at another time it was inhabited by a gang of forgers, who doubtless fomented the superstitions connected with it. The present owner found it in the hands of wood-merchants who had sheds in the garden.

[2] Mestre itself derives its name from the fact that it is the termination of the *strada maestra* or high road.

BRIDGE NEAR THE PALAZZO LABIA

The construction of the railway bridge across the lagoon by the Austrians, completed in 1841, destroyed the importance of the *canale regio* as an avenue of approach, and the terminus close by, like railway stations all the world over, diminished its "desirability as a residential neighbourhood": the Cannaregio, once renowned for the beauty of its gardens, and almost as fashionable as the Canalazzo, ceased to be a "good address."

On our right as we enter the canal, we see the church of San Giobbe (Job), which we must visit for the sake of (*a*) the tomb of its benefactor, Doge Cristoforo Moro — thought by some to be the original "Moor of Venice"; (*b*) the exquisite carvings by P. Lombardi; and (*c*) the fine Previtali, a Virgin and Child with St. John-Baptist and St. Catherine. The vineyard of the suppressed convent of San Giobbe was converted from 1812 to 1870 into a botanical garden. The *campo* was once full of *Scuole*, which have been turned into mean habitations. Below the church the canal is spanned by the Ponte di Tre Archi, beyond which begins the Fondamenta Cannaregio, where was the Traghetto station for Mestre, removed since the

advent of *vaporetti* to the Rialto. On this *fondamenta* is Palazzo Surian (968), frequently occupied by English envoys, and in 1743 by the French ambassador, who had Jean-Jacques Rousseau for secretary. Nearer the Canalazzo we should notice Palazzo Savorgnan (349) belonging in the eighteenth century to the Dukes of Modena; Palazzo Manfrin, where in 1745 dwelt Robert Holden as the English envoy;[1] and the splendid neglected eighteenth-century Palazzo Labia, with its Tiepolo fresco, open to the public every morning.

A few steps beyond Cà Labia is the pontoon, named from the neighbouring Church of San Geremia, from whence the *forestiere* may take the steamer down the Canalazzo. Before doing so, however, he may like to row to the farther side of the Cannaregio and make a digression into the *ghetto* (or rather *ghetti*, for there are three of them,

[1] It once had a good picture gallery, but the best pictures have been removed. The first English ambassador, Sir Henry Wotton, seems to have lived in 1604 (says his biographer) in Palazzo Silvia, Ponte degli Ornesani, near the Church of S. Gerolamo. He had his walls hung with arras and gilded leather and adorned with pictures and armour, great andirons and lanterns, tables with their "carpets," a billiard-table, a "ground carpet" in the dining-room, and "much large furniture rented from the Jews, who boasted that they had had 'a fleece of him' and looked for his return as they hoped for the coming of the Messiah."—*Wotton's Letters*, Pearsall Smith, vol. i. p. 57.

GIUDECCA

Vecchio, Nuovo, and *Nuovissimo*). The word is derived by some authorities from *gettare* to cast, for a foundry stood on the ground assigned to the Israelites in 1517. Their forebears had been allowed to settle in Venice on a four years' trial 144 years earlier. They were joined at intervals by contingents from Spain, Portugal, and Germany; and in the high narrow houses of this confined, unwholesome district, the poorer Jews of Venice still dwell and multiply, substitute goose for pork, buy and sell and fabricate antiques, and worship in the synagogue built by Longhena in the seventeenth century for the Spanish Jews.

III

Dorsoduro

An earlier place of Jewish segregation was probably the long island, or chain of islands, lying south-west of the city, originally called Spina Lunga, but long since known as the Giudecca, or in Venetian "Zuecca."

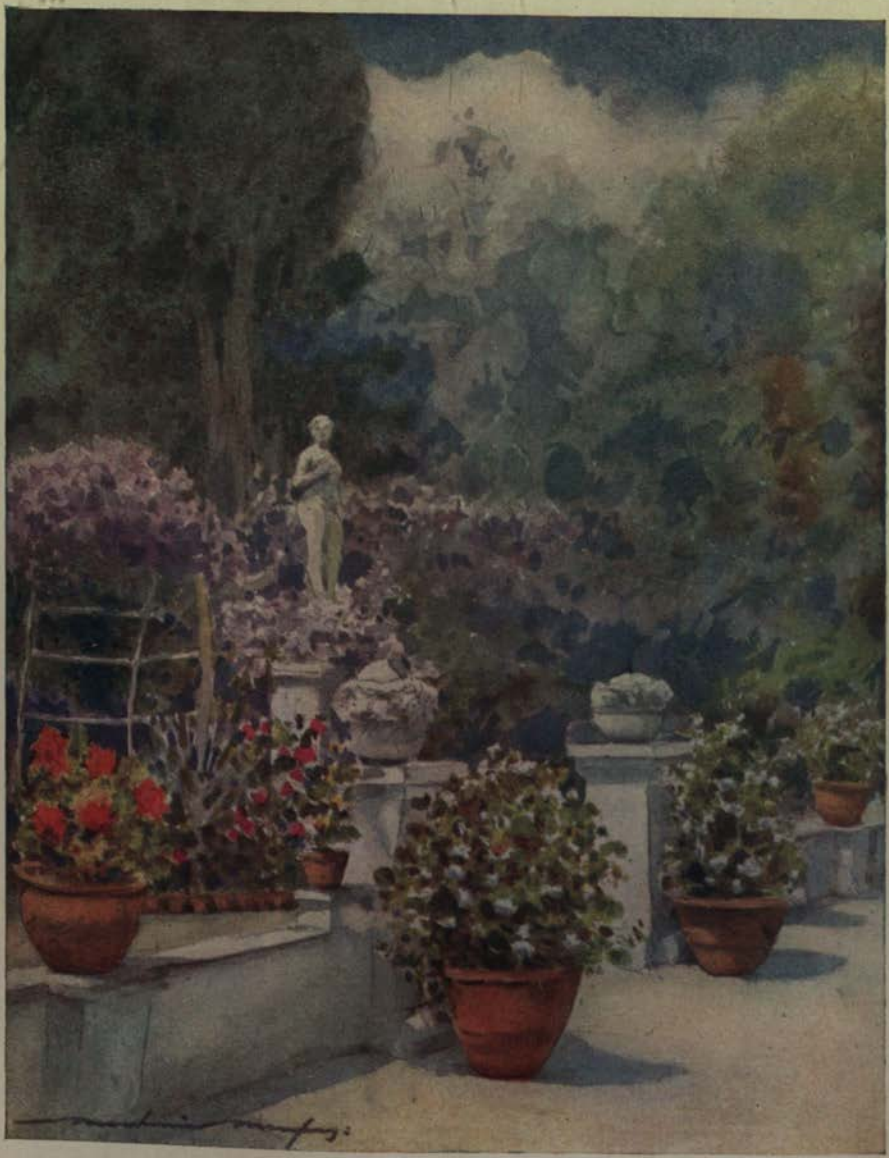
It was once occupied chiefly by religious houses, by convent gardens, and by the orchards, groves, and

pleasure-houses of wealthy patricians, who satisfied in this delicious spot that longing for shade and verdure which every now and then assails the dwellers in the City of the Lagoons.

It is no longer the haunt of cultured leisure, but, for the most part, a poorly inhabited industrial suburb. Its most noticeable building (attaining a certain dignity when silhouetted against the sunset sky) is not a palace, church, or convent, but a great factory employing several hundreds of hands; while the only remaining garden of any extent is possessed by an Englishman who, by a happy coincidence, bears the name of Eden. A large part of this consists of land reclaimed from the lagoon. The "Giardino Eden"—admission to which is not difficult to obtain in the morning—is well worth inspecting, especially in May and June, the time of roses and Madonna lilies. Facing the garden, on the Rio della Croce, should be noticed the Cosmopolitan Hospital, founded by the late Lady Layard for the benefit of British seamen and foreign visitors of all nationalities.

On the *fondamenta* facing Venice is a fine Palladian Church, the votive offering of the city

MRS. EDEN'S GARDEN IN VENICE



to the Redeemer for the cessation of the terrible plague of 1576.[1]

The Giudecca unites with the land opposite, called from the solidity of the soil *dorso duro*, to form the Sestiere of that name. But so wide and wind-swept is the channel which flows between that to cross it safely in gondola a *secondo remo* is frequently needed, while there are stormy days when it can only be traversed in *vaporetto*, and foggy evenings when even the steamer service is suspended.

Normally a *vaporetto* leaves once in every hour for the Riva degli Schiavoni, calling at the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, while smaller boats ply back and forth at intervals of a few minutes between the Giudecca and a pontoon on the Fondamenta delle Zattere, the Quay of Wood-rafts. Beside this long sunny quay are moored small coasting vessels with glorious painted sails. They are freighted with logs cut on the eastern shore of the Adriatic, and are often left under the sole but sufficient guardianship of yellow, irascible dogs. From these boats retail wood-sellers and thrifty

[1] See further, pp. 140, 174.

householders stock their cellars, after a long course of bargaining and watchful weighing.

Close to the pontoon of the Giudecca Vaporetto is the starting-place of the steamer for Fusina, offering us a pleasant opportunity of retracing the once favourite route to Venice. It passes close to S. Giorgio in Alga (St. George of the Seaweed), one of the many isles of prayer and studious leisure which studded the whole expanse of the lagoon; and the quaint Madonna at the end of the long wall looks, from the shelter of her green umbrella, at the soldiery who guard the modern powder-magazine, and at the new-fangled *vaporetti* with the same suave glance that she formerly bestowed on monks and barge-borne travellers.

At Fusina, where to-day the little train connects with the steamer, the seventeenth-century traveller John Evelyn, bound for Padua for "the faire of their St. Anthony," passed with his boat into that system of locks and sluices which he describes with such enthusiasm. The second and third-class passengers of his day did the journey in "the tranect" or "common ferry which trades to Venice," at the landing-stage of which in Padua

SAN GIORGIO MAGGIORE

Shakespeare's Portia bade her servant meet her with the "properties" borrowed from Cousin Bellario.

The light railway follows the course of the sluggish Brenta with a deliberation which gives us ample time to observe the characteristic scenery: the fat water-pastures gay with flowers in spring; the arcaded vines in autumn, rich in fruit and tinted leaf; the theatrical gaily-painted villas designed for the season of "villeggiatura." Presently Dolo, the chief place of the district, is reached, and then Strà, where those not bound for Padua may alight and visit the great Pisani palace. It was purchased by Napoleon for Prince Eugene, Viceroy of Lombardy, and later was occupied by Austrian Grand Dukes who robbed it of all that they could take away. The furniture of the Napoleonic apartments has, however, been preserved, and a few portraits by Longhi of the original owners hang on the brocade-covered walls. It is good to pass from the immense dim *sale*, haunted with their own past grandeur, to the sunny gardens, which, though ill-planned and unkept, possess a curious charm.

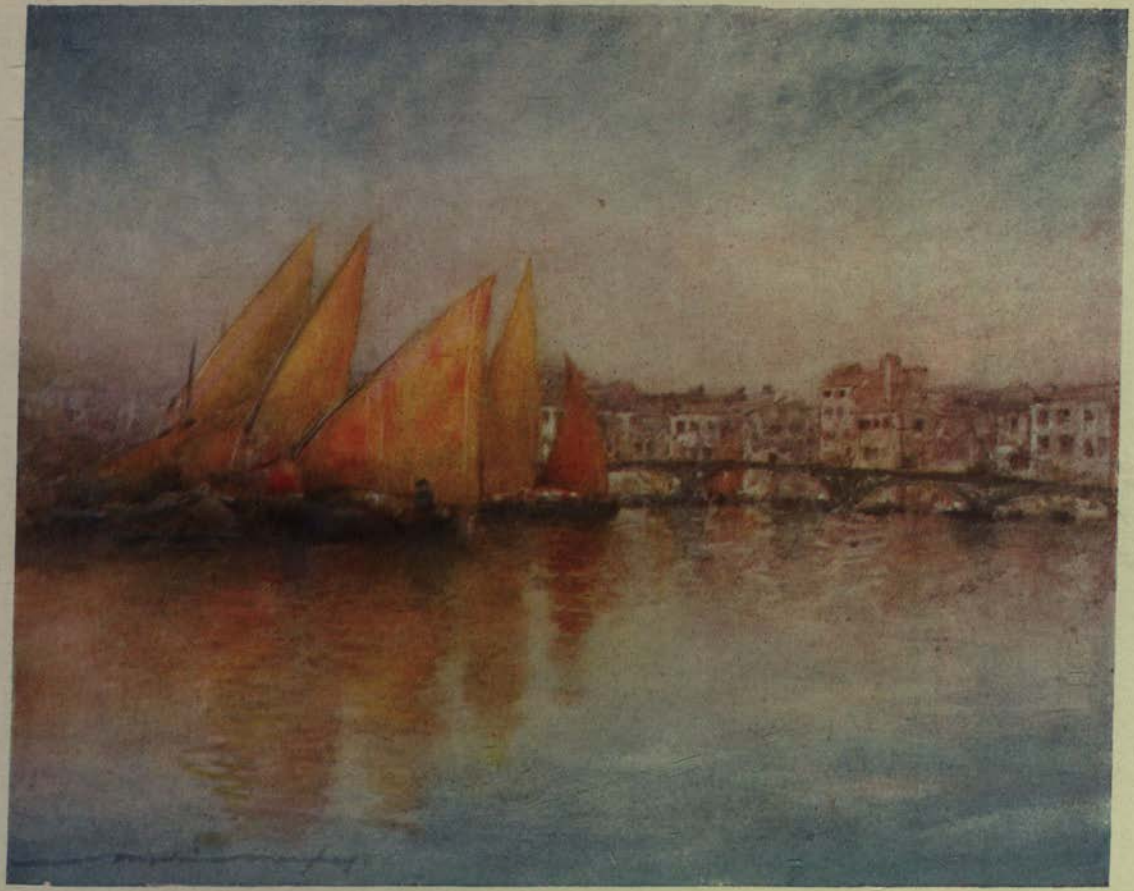
The pleasantest half-hour of the expedition is,

however, that of the evening return across the rose-tinted lagoon, with the forward view of the domes and bell-towers of "the city which is always putting out to sea," and the backward panorama of flaming sky, against which are silhouetted in shadowy purple the unforgettable pyramids of the Euganean hills.

Dorsoduro, originally the abode of poor fisher-folk, has fewer important buildings of early date than the other Sestieri. Its architectural beauties, moreover, are mostly turned towards the Grand Canal, and have therefore been dealt with in another chapter.[1] Yet the Zattere has its features of interest. We notice, for instance, (1) at the end nearest to the Dogana the fifteenth-century Church of the Holy Spirit, reopened and attached to a parish after the adjoining convent had been suppressed; (2) the Scuola of the Spirito Santo, now a tobacco store; (3) the Caserma (Barracks) once the Hospital of the Incurabili, where Ignatius Loyola served, and then, at a later date, an Asylum for Orphans, who were so well instructed in music and singing that, as our old *Guida* puts

[1] See Chap. III., p. 122 *sqq.*

OFF THE GIUDECCA



it, "no conspicuous personage ever left Venice without having honoured the pious foundation with his presence"; (4) the modern Hôtel Calcina, on the site of which, close to a store of lime (*calce*), stood the Osteria frequented by John Ruskin; (5) the very dignified Church of Santa Maria del Rosario and the adjoining convent of the Gesuati—an order which settled in this locality in 1392—now turned into an orphanage.

We now reach the Ponte Lungo, from which we obtain a glimpse of the picturesque and much-painted view of the Canal and Church of San Trovaso.[1] We cross the bridge and continue our way along the widening quay, till we bend inwards towards the Campo San Basegio. The church of that name, turned into a wood-store, and then destroyed early in the nineteenth century, was on the site of the present Trattoria delle due Sorelle. Following the Fondamenta San Basegio along a side-canal, we reach the Ponte San Sebastiano, by which we cross to the sixteenth-century church famous for the pictures of Paolo Veronese, who lies buried there. His portrayal of the patron saint is

[1] See p. 126.

noticeable in that we are not presented with the usual nude, arrow-stuck figure, but with that of a knight in complete armour carrying a crimson banner. Over the first altar is a St. Nicholas, painted by Titian at the age of eighty-six. The well-known Supper in the House of a Pharisee by Veronese, now in the Brera Gallery at Milan, was taken from the adjacent Convent of San Sebastiano.

Just behind this church opens the Campo of St. Raphael, with the Chiesa del Angelo Raffaello, said to be, in order of foundation, the second oldest in Venice. It has been restored again and again, and attained its present form in 1618. The arms of its ninth-century rebuilders, the Ariani, are on a well-head in the *campo*, and close by, well seen from the Fondamenta del Soccorso, is their palace with its beautiful windows.

Passing through the Fondamenta della Pescaria, the headquarters, in former days, of the fishing industry, we reach the island and church dedicated to St. Nicholas, and surnamed, from the poverty of its inhabitants, "dei Mendicoli"—of the Beggars.

Between these dwellers in the westernmost

A NARROW CANAL

corner of the city, and those of Castello in its extreme east, there existed an enmity which perpetuated, it is surmised, an ancient feud between the men of Jesolo and Heraclea. The different doors[1] in the Church of S. Trovaso used by Nicolotti and Castellani, and the *ponte* called "dei Pugni"—Fisticuff Bridges—where contests of strength[2] took place between the factions, are memorials of a hereditary enmity, which still crops up at regattas.

Turning westwards again, we walk by the side of a canal which, beginning as Rio S. Niccolò, becomes successively Rio S. Raffaello, del Carmine, and Sta Margherita. The *fondamenta*, during a part of its course, is named after a certain Giuseppe Briati, who, having learned the art of glass-making in Bohemia, was persecuted in Murano, till at length he was permitted to open a furnace here. A few paces farther on the pavement takes the name of a magnificent, but now decayed and poorly inhabited palace, Palazzo Foscarini. From one of its balconies in 1574 Henry III. of France witnessed

[1] See Horatio Brown's *Life in the Lagoons*.

[2] There is an interesting picture of one of these contests in the Palazzo Querini Stampaglia.

the Guerra dei Pugni on the bridge spanning the Rio in front of it.

The bridge is an approach to the Church of Sta Maria del Carmine. Built in the fourteenth century, it was, like so many other Venetian churches, spoilt by restoring zealots in the times of Catholic reaction; happily, however, it retains some traces of its original aspect, while it must be admitted that the straightening of its bent campanili at the end of the seventeenth century was an exceedingly ingenious performance. The church must be visited for the sake of a lovely Nativity by Cima, with a delicious background of precipitous, tree-shadowed rock glowing in evening light—a reminiscence clearly of Conegliano, the painter's mountain-home.

Over the door in the monastery cloister (No. 2613) is an interesting bit of early sculpture; and opposite Palazzo Guoro (No. 2615) we notice a statue of Othello, whom a Venetian tradition has located in this house. Next to it (No. 2616) is the *Scuola*, or Guild House, of Sta Maria del Carmine, containing some pictures by Tiepolo.

A *calle* on the north side of "I Carmini" leads

A SOTTO PORTICO

us to the big but plebeian Campo[1] Sta Margherita, which we cross diagonally and leave by a Rio Terrà, terminating at the most renowned of the various bridges, the Ponte dei Pugni. Like all the bridges used for the "Guerra" it is unparapeted, so that the weaker might go harmlessly, not to the wall but to the water; and its paving shows the marks where the left foot of the leaders was planted while waiting for the signal to join battle.

The bridge leads to the Church of S. Barnabà, uninteresting save for its thirteenth-century campanile; and we quickly retrace our steps to the big *campo*, and traverse its length, and leave it by a *calle* leading to the Rio of the great Palazzo Foscari. A bridge directly in front of us carries us across to the Campiello and Church of S. Pantaleone —a saint who shares with Luke the Evangelist the patronship of physicians.

It is claimed for this church that it was founded in the eighth century. We know that it was rebuilt in the eleventh by the family of Signolo, whose palace (No. 3707) in the *campo* passed in the sixteenth to the Loredan, and retains their

[1] The church, closed in 1810, has since 1822 been in the possession of a congregation of Italian Protestants.

name. Mrs. Jameson (*Sacred and Legendary Art*) tells us that she loved to linger in S. Pantaleone for the sake, not of art but of humanity—"the picturesque mothers with their infants, the little children reciting their catechism." It is, in fact, the parish church of a poor and teeming district; and it is the last in this Sestiere. We have but to cross the Rio to the left to step outside the confines of Dorsoduro.

IV

Sestiere di San Polo

This is the smallest of the Sestieri, with the exception of Santa Croce. Unlike its neighbours, it forms a compact, if irregular mass, in the very heart of Venice. It is bounded on the north-west, west, and south by curving lines of canals sweeping past San Giacomo dell' Orio and San Giovanni Evangelista to the Grand Canal by the Rio della Frascada, which debouches into the Canalazzo between the Grimani and Balbi Palaces. The frontage of the Sestiere on the Canalazzo is the shortest of all, from the Grimani Palace at San Tomà to the Rialto Bridge, but San Polo contains

CANAL PRIULI

within its narrow boundaries not a little of exceptional beauty and interest.

The district takes its name from the Church of St. Paul (in Venetian "Polo"), a ninth-century foundation which, in its present barocco form, is wholly uninteresting. Here is the centre of the Sestiere, but its main points of interest are spread to the south-west and north-east of it: south-west the Church of the Frari and the Schools of St. John the Evangelist and St. Roch, north-east the Church of San Giacomo di Rialto, and the famous bridge, and the busy mercantile life that seethes around it.

We may start from the south-western boundary, at the Scuola di San Rocco, and work our way to the Rialto Bridge, where San Polo joins hands with the last of our Sestieri, Santa Croce.

The confraternity of St. Roch, like that of St. John the Evangelist, was among the six chief guilds of Venice. San Rocco was the richest and most attractive of them all: the Doge of the time was always enrolled among its members. The community was formed for the purpose of tending the poor and sick and fever-stricken; and they determined to possess themselves of the body of

their patron saint. The Venetians were always skilful relic-snatchers, and they succeeded here, as in scores of other cases. They brought St. Roch's relics from Montpellier in 1485.

Buildings fit to receive such a splendid guest were soon begun, and Tintoretto painted one of the pictures of the Lower Hall while other painters were preparing their designs. Ruskin, who calls this *Scuola* "one of the three most precious buildings in Italy," has elaborately described these paintings in the second volume of his *Modern Painters*.

Just beyond the *Scuola* is the great Franciscan church, "Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari," a Gothic brick structure, which shares with the Dominican Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo the rôle of Venetian Pantheon. The design of it, whether to be attributed to Niccolò Pisani, or to Scipione Bon ("Fra Pacifico"), a sainted member of the Order, resembles that of most Gothic churches in Italy. The plain wall above the main arcade is carried up to the groining, and pierced only by small clerestory windows: intended to offer a great plain surface to the painter's brush. Here lies many a Doge, and here rests Titian, who had painted his great

RIO E CHIESA DEGLI OGNISSANTI

"Assumption" for the High Altar, where it might still be seen in its place by the *Forestiere Illuminato* of the eighteenth century.

The bells of the Frari are among the most beautiful in Venice, and the deep tones of the great tenor recall our noblest English examples. Perhaps it is this that gave rise to the unwritten tradition that the Frari campanile contains the bells of old St. Paul, threatened by Cromwell to be transformed into pieces of ordnance, and rescued for pious uses by the timely intervention and purchase of the Venetian ambassador of the day.

The great conventual buildings with their stately courts—the cloisters whence came Popes Sixtus IV. and V. to the throne of St. Peter—are now the *Archivio*, and an extremely rich one. There are over three hundred rooms filled with diplomatic treasures. In the Sala della Regina Margherita many interesting autographs are shown.

Crossing the Ponte dei Frari, a few steps along the *fondamenta* of the same name, beside the Rio S. Stin, then to the left along the Rio Terrà San Tomà (so called because it bounds the Parish of St. Thomas on this side), brings us to the

Church and Scuola of S. Giovanni Evangelista. The church was founded in the tenth century and rebuilt in the seventeenth. The confraternity—one of the six principal *Scuole*—was founded in the middle of the thirteenth century, and its hall removed to this site from Sant' Aponal in 1307; the *Scuola* was completed in the middle of the fifteenth century, and the long staircase which leads from the Guild Hall to the Church was designed by Pietro Lombardi. One of its treasures is a curious reliquary said to contain a piece of the true cross. The building itself Ruskin describes as "the most characteristic example in Venice of the architecture that Carpaccio, Cima, and Giovanni Bellini loved."

Those who have time may like to find their way from this point to the Campo di Sant' Agostino. It is a short way, but a devious one: by the Calli del Magazen and del Tabacco, through Campo San Stin (named from the demolished Church of San Stefanino), by the Calle and Ponte Donà and the Calle della Chiesa. The Chiesa of S. Agostino, like that of S. Stin, is now suppressed. The chief interest of the *campo* lies in the fact that here

A RUINED PALAZZO

stood the Palace of Bajamonte Tiepolo.[1] After his house was destroyed, a column recording the fact was placed here: a remarkable monument of State justice which, after several removals, found its way to Villa Melzi on the Lake of Como.

From this *campo* we may pass by Rio Terrà Seconda to Ponte Bernardo, through a Calle del Scaletter which, unlike many of its compeers, still retains the shop whence it originally derived its name. The *Scaleteri* were makers of "Scaletti," or wedding-cakes, so called from the stamp on them, which resembled a *scala* or ladder.

At Ponte Bernardo we pass by a magnificent Gothic Palazzo Bernardo, of the fourteenth century, and, next beyond it, the Sanudo Palace, where in all probability lived the fourteenth-century traveller and writer, Marin Sanudo. Now we turn to the right down a Ramo Calle Bernardo and Rio Terrà Sant' Antonio; left into Campo San Polo. This is the largest *campo* in Venice, next to Campo Santa Margherita, and it is remarkable for its fine palaces. Two splendid fourteenth-century palaces of the Soranzo—in one of which, perhaps, lived Giovanni

[1] On Bajamonte Tiepolo, see further p. 114.

Soranzo who was Doge when Dante visited Venice —look out over the broad space which forms so excellent a playground for the children of the Sestieri and a drying-ground for the laundresses of the neighbourhood. Far different was the scene presented by the *campo* in bygone days, when it witnessed many a fête and bull-fight. With the Soranzo and Tiepolo Palaces on our left and the church on our right, we pass through the Square of St. Paul, and turn sharp to the left in the far corner, down the *calle* and over the Bridge of the Madonetta—the ancient "Ponte Virginis Mariae." Then we traverse the Campiello of the Melon-vendors (*meloni*) and the Rio Terrà of the same: then, turning left again down the Calle del Mezzo, we find ourselves in the very picturesque little Campo Sant' Aponal. Dialect has played its usual tricks with the name of the patron saint, Apollinaris, whom Ravenna venerates as Sant' Apollinare; and his church, erected here in 1034, has lost its pristine interest and beauty. In 1740 the pilgrim was still expected to revere among its relics the head of the Prophet Jonah—the *ne plus ultra*, surely, even of Venetian piety! But the portal of the church has

A CAMPIELLO

acquired since then an artistic treasure, which cannot fail to appeal even to the unbeliever of modern days, in the fine relief taken from the demolished Church of Sant' Elena, on the island of that name. It represents Vittorio Capello kneeling before the saint. From Sant' Aponal a sharp turn to the right and then to the left takes us into the Campo San Silvestro, quite close to the invisible Canalazzo, where a nineteenth-century building stands on the site of a church founded in the middle of the ninth century. From this *campo* we turn first to the left and then to the right, so reaching the Ruga Vecchia San Giovanni and the church which gives its name—San Giovanni di Rialto, or Elemosinario. The campanile of this church dates from the last years of the fourteenth century, replacing one which fell in 1071. Within the church are two pictures worthy of note. Over the High Altar is a very fine representation, by Titian, of the patron, St. John the Almsgiver, Bishop of Alexandria, and a beautiful Pordenone is in the right-hand chapel.

Our steps now turn down the Ruga degli Orefici, in which the goldsmith's trade has been

supplanted by that of the greengrocer, and by this we pass to the Campo San Giacomo di Rialto, and the church so greatly loved and praised by Ruskin under the name of "St. James of the Deep Stream." Here we must note—if the "movimento" of this bustling quarter will permit us—the little sixteenth-century pulpit, its spiral staircase supported on the hunched back of the "Gobbo del Rialto." From this pulpit in old days laws and decrees of the Republic were promulgated, even as from the similar pulpit at St. Mark's. The colonnade which flanks this *campo*, now given over to furious trafficking, was, in the Rialto's fashionable days, as favourite a promenade of the Quality as the Piazza is to-day.

V

Sestiere di Santa Croce

This is the smallest of all the Sestieri: its houses are numbered only up to 2359, while that of Castello reaches a total of 6828. Centuries ago it embraced the entire island of Murano, besides that section of Venice proper which still pertains to it, the thickly populated district which lies to south

IN MURANO

and west of the Grand Canal, northward of a line drawn between the Rialto Bridge and the Island of Santa Chiara, beyond the railway station. It is, for the most part, a poor district, and contains few buildings of imposing proportions or of commanding interest. Such as there are stand for the most part on the Grand Canal: the Fondaco dei Turchi—perhaps its chiefest glory—the Corner and Pesaro Palaces, the Churches of San Stae and San Simeone Piccolo, the Papadopoli Gardens—on the site of the former Convent of Santa Croce, from which the Sestiere takes its name. What we have to say about these will be best reserved for a trip down the Grand Canal itself.[1]

But there are certain churches of real interest of which no glimpse can be obtained from the Canalazzo, some of them only, or most conveniently, approachable on foot.

We may follow the lead of our eighteenth-century guide, the *Forestiere Illuminato*, and visit a few of these churches, along a line running rather deviously from east to west: San Cassiano, Santa Maria Mater Domini, San Giacomo dell' Orio, San

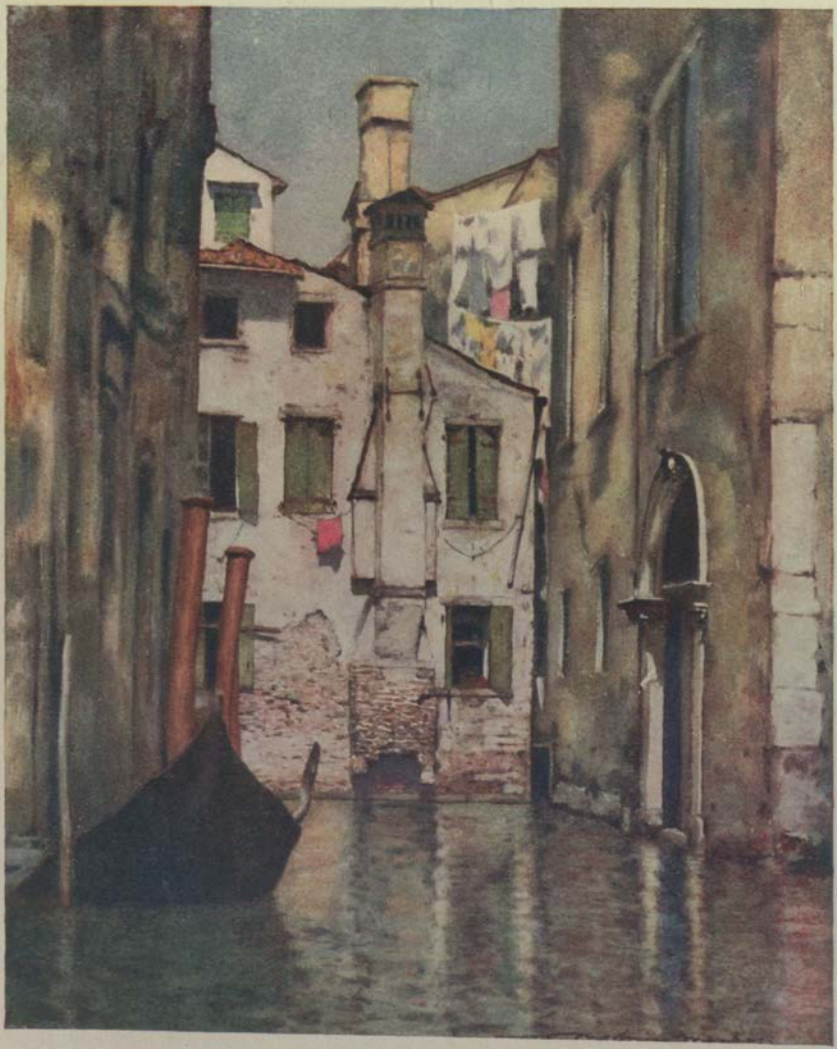
[1] See Chapter III.

Simeone Grande, San Nicolò dei Tolentini, and Sant' Andrea.

From the Campo di S. Giacomo on the west side of the Rialto Bridge (where we ended our inspection of the Sestiere di S. Polo) we take our way down the Ruga degli Speziali (the Road of the Wholesale Druggists), then through the Campo delle Beccarie—Square of the "Slaughter-houses," which were established in 1339 in the dwelling of a Querini banned for participation in Bajamonte Tiepolo's insurrection—and the Calle dei Botteri, called after a colony of cask-makers resident here in the Middle Ages, till we reach the Campo and Church of San Cassiano. The church, founded in the tenth century on the site of an oratory of St. Cecilia, has nothing ancient left to it save its thirteenth-century campanile.

From the south side of this church we may pass by the Ponte and Campiello della Malvasia (whose title records the former presence of a wine-shop where foreign "travelled" wines were sold), turning first sharp to the left, and then to the right, to the Bridge, Campo and Church of Sta Maria Mater Domini. Before reaching the bridge we pass on

A QUIET RIO



our right the Ramo Calle della Regina—named after Queen Catarina Cornero[1]—in which stands a palace where the writer Carlo Gozzi lived, and of which he has left a description. The tiny Campo of Santa Maria is a very interesting one, with Gothic palaces, and the church, like so many others in Venice, is an old foundation rebuilt in the sixteenth century. What attracts the discerning *forestiere* is a fine picture of Santa Cristina—patron of the community of nuns who formerly used the church—by Catena. The saint is kneeling by the Lake of Bolsena; and her instrument of martyrdom, the millstone suspended round her neck, is supported by angels.

From Santa Maria Mater Domini we may take a straight course (parallel to the Grand Canal, which is on our right), mounting and descending many bridges, over the Rio Cà Pesaro which leads direct to the fine palace of that name on the Grand Canal, then over the Rio Mocenigo, past the Salizzada S. Stae (by which we might pass to the church of that name), then over the Rio di Cà Tron and the Rio del Megio ("Millet"),

[1] See Chapter III. p. 113.

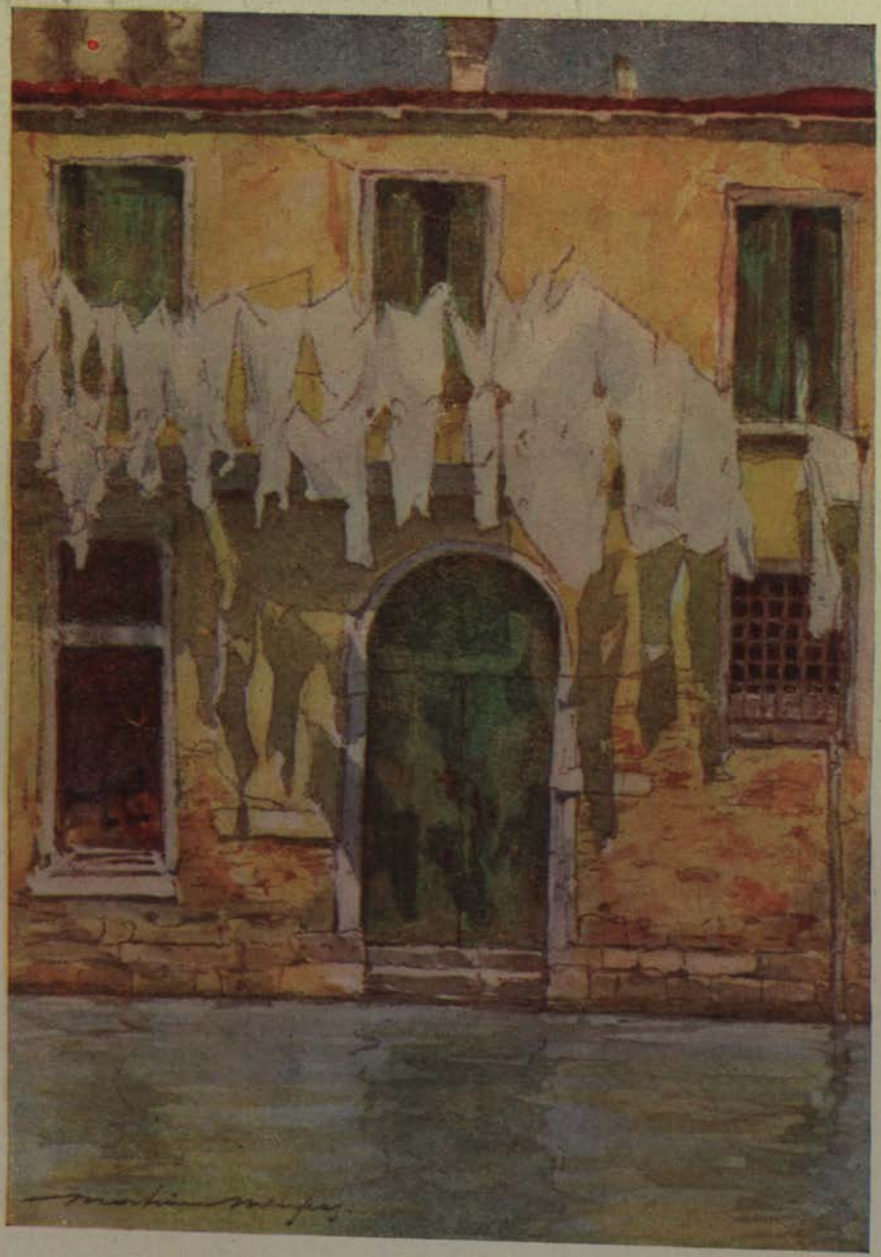
after which we turn sharp to the left, and soon find ourselves in the Campo S. Giacomo dell' Orio.

San Giacomo dell' Orio furnishes in its name one of the most interesting etymological puzzles in this city of quaint names. Sansovino would have it *del rio*, scarcely a distinguishing name in a place where so many a "chiesa" has a "rio" for its neighbour; others would make it "de Lorio," from the island Luprio, on which this church and *campo* stand, and which gave its name to the name-church of the whole Sestiere, "Santa Croce in Luprio." The simplest and most convincing method is to hypothesize a family called Orio from which the title should be derived.

The church itself, founded in 555, has been repeatedly modernized. Within, its timber roof gives it a special character, nor are its pictures without interest.

From the Campo San Giacomo we cross the Rio San Zano Degolà (San Giovanni Decollato), and pass by the Ruga Vecchia, to the Campo de' Tedeschi, then skirting the north side of the square, turn to the right at the far corner up a *calle* which

AN UNFREQUENTED CANAL



widens greatly as we proceed, and at the end of this we light upon the Church of San Simeone Profeta (called "Grande," to distinguish it from "San Simeone Piccolo" on the Canalazzo). This church contains a Catena and a Tintoret, but its real feature is the statue of the Prophet executed by a Roman sculptor, Marcus Romanus, early in the fourteenth century.

He is dead, and his face is ghastly but dignified and peaceful; his hair and beard flowing freely, his emaciated hands crossed; the whole studied carefully, yet without parade of technical skill.

A short passage behind the church leads to the small iron bridge that spans Rio Marin (an interesting canal to which we may well revert a little later). After crossing this we turn to the right, and a straight and narrow *calle* conducts us direct to the Grand Canal, almost exactly at the point where the big iron bridge connects with the Church of the Scalzi and the railway station. We shall, however, turn to the left here, and maintain a steadfast course along the bank of the Canalazzo past San Simeone Piccolo (which is scarcely worth a visit), till, close by the English

Sailors' Institute, we reach the Canal and Fondamenta of the Tolentini and the Bridge of Santa Croce. Immediately beyond the bridge the luxuriant verdure of the Papadopoli Gardens—well worth a visit some day, by permission—marks the spot where stood of old the Church and Convent of Santa Croce in Luprio. But now we turn inland once more, to the left, and follow the Fondamenta dei Tolentini, past a very picturesque fruit shop, and the sixteenth century Church of San Niccolo —the work of Scamozzi or of Palladio. Here we may cross the Tolentini bridge, and pursue our course on the other side of the water till we reach a point where two bridges side by side span the canal which leads to the left towards the Carmine, Cà Foscari, and the centre of Venice, to the right to the quaint Campo and Church of Sant' Andrea. We follow the latter road, crossing the bridge in front of us, and then the picturesque "Ponte Tre Ponti" where three canals meet. The open space in which the Church of St. Andrew stands is a delightfully picturesque *campo*, with its touch of greenery, its quaint notice against blasphemy, its bas-relief over the church door—St. Peter walking

WORK GIRLS

on the sea—and its charming outlook across the lagoon to the Eugenean Hills. Here we have reached, to all intents and purposes, the far limit of our Sestiere; for if we cross the bridge to the opposite island of Santa Chiara, we shall find but a wilderness of railway metals, sheds, warehouses and buildings of utility, with no trace of the thirteenth century church and convent (secularised in 1819) save that the site and some part of the building of the latter have become the *Ospedale Militare.* The church, founded in 1234, was destroyed by fire in the sixteenth century. The *forestiere* of 1740 was instructed to reverence its nail from the True Cross and its ring of St. Louis of France with a piece of the True Cross inset as gem; to admire its five altars, its "Tavoli di eccellenti Pennelli," and its structure rebuilt "alla maniera moderna." The English visitor of to-day will mourn the loss of the *seicento* building less than that of its thirteenth century predecessor: unless, perchance, he be of the same mind as Sir Henry Wotton, ambassador of James I., who came first to Venice in July 1604, "when Shakespeare was probably engaged in writing his great

Venetian tragedy *Othello*," which was acted before King James in the November of that year. Sir Henry's views of Gothic architecture are worthy of Addison. Of pointed arches he remarks: "Both for the natural imbecility of the sharp angle itself, and likewise for their very uncomeliness," they "ought to be exiled from judicious eyes and left to their first inventors, the Gothes or Lumbards, amongst other reliques of that barbarous age."[1]

If we have walked from end to end of this smallest of the Sestieri, we have not, of course, exhausted its interest. That interest lies less in the number of conspicuous buildings it embraces—in which it cannot hope to vie with its more fortunate sister-divisions—than in its general character.

The Rio Marin, for instance, which we crossed on our journey—named, it is said, after Marin Dandolo who excavated it some nine or ten centuries ago—has a typical picturesqueness and interest of its own. On to it look two large and dignified palaces, Palazzo Capello and Palazzo Gradenigo, with charming gardens, concealed, alas,

[1] *Wotton's Letters*, by Pearsall Smith, vol. i. p. 196.

RIO DI SAN MARINA

UNDER THE MIDDAY SUN

from the gaze of the passer-by. The garden of the latter is so spacious that in the eighteenth century it was the scene of a bull-fight. This Rio is generally full of life and movement, for, with its continuations, it forms one of the chief water-ways from the railway station to St. Mark's. And those who so use it may feast their eyes on many a quaint and beautiful reach and angle.

The Canali, Calli, Rughe, Salizzade, and Campi of this plebeian quarter of the city offer to the discerning eye a special picture of the life of the Venetian *popolino*, in a Sestiere to which the conventional visitor with his *Baedeker* is almost a stranger.

CHAPTER II

THE SESTIERE OF S. MARCO

"The Place of S. Mark is the heart of Venice."
HOWELL'S *Venetian Life.*

I

THE MAIN ARTERIES

THERE are four ways of drawing near to the heart of Venice. First there is the grand water-way to the steps of the Piazzetta. Second there is the road from the east by the Via SS. Filippo e Giacomo, across the bridge of St. Mark's Canons (Ponte di Canonica), along their little *fondamenta* —leaving to the right the palace purchased by the infamous Bianca Capello, and the Foscarini and Morosini palaces, now Messrs. Pauly's stores of glass and statuary; and so to the Ramo di Canonica and the Piazzetta dei Leoni. But this,

PANORAMA SEEN FROM ST. MARK'S BASIN

after all, is but a back-door entrance, by no means to be recommended for a first visit. Third, there is the highway of the Merceria, the approach of those coming from the Rialto and the General Post Office. The Merceria has four divisions. (i.) The Merceria Due Aprile, beginning at the Rialto, was so named, after Italian unification, from the day when Venice decided on resistance to Austria. Of old time, however, the Mercers had no footing in this quarter, which belonged to the grocers and was known as the Spezzeria.

Passing through the Campo S. Bartolomeo with its bronze statue of Goldoni, we reach (ii.) the Merceria S. Salvator. The church was one of those built by S. Magno, to whom appeared "Jesus Christ our Lord and committed to him that in the midst of the city he should build a church above the place where he should see a red cloud rest." It was rebuilt in the sixteenth century by the Lombardi. Within is a very beautiful Supper at Emmaus, probably by Benedetto Diana: without in the façade we notice a cannon-ball lodged there by the Austrians in 1849, and a tablet[1]

[1] See further, p. 132.

recording that Alexander III., fleeing from Barbarossa in 1177, slept there.

We next reach (iii.) the Merceria S. Zulian. The Church of St. Julian on the left is the erection, on a ninth-century foundation, of Sansovino. The houses from here to the Ponte dei Barretteri—the bridge of the cap-makers, who had stalls here—once belonged to the monks of S. Georgio Maggiore: and on one of these buildings is the fifteenth-century bas-relief of St. George so warmly praised by Ruskin.[1]

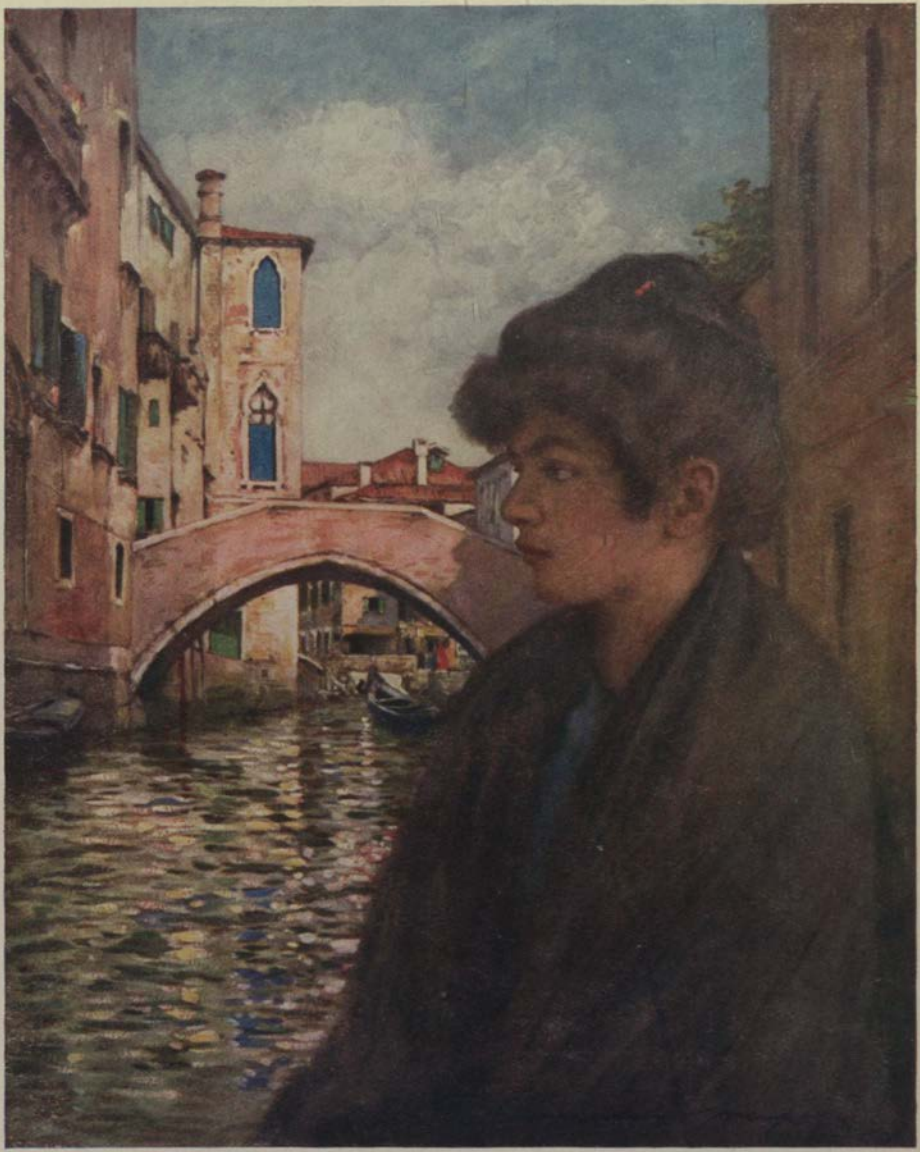
Just beyond this begins (iv.) the Merceria dell' Orologio, and passing on the left the opening of the Calle Larga S. Marco, and on the right the very ancient Albergo del Capello Nero (Inn of the Black Hat), we emerge on to the Piazza through the archway beneath the Clock Tower.

Time has robbed the Merceria of some of its charms and of all its sanitary superiority. No longer do the great ladies of Venice resort thither on Ascension Day for an exhibition of the latest Paris modes. No longer is the street[2] "tapistried

[1] *St. Mark's Rest*, ch. iv., "St. Theodore the chair-seller."

[2] Dolls dressed in the newest Paris fashions were exhibited then as part of the Ascension-tide festivities.

MARIETTA



with cloth of gold, rich damasks and other silks which the shops expose and hang before their houses"; nor is it sweet with the essences of perfumers, or musical with the pipes of caged singing-birds. No longer, on the other hand, does it seem strange and beautiful to the *forestiere* from other towns and countries to find a street "exceeding cleane and paved with brick" and free from roaming animals, deep mud, and heaps of festering refuse; while the little shops appear to modern eyes dark, stuffy, and incommodious. Yet if the traveller to-day cannot, like John Evelyn in the seventeenth century, describe the Merceria as "one of the most delicious streetes in the world,"[1] he will readily allow that it is one of the most interesting, nor should any visitor omit the walk through this thronged and busy portion of the Sestiere of St. Mark.

English visitors, however, are usually lodged on the Grand Canal between the Iron bridge and the Royal Gardens, and will therefore reach the Piazza by the fourth and perhaps the most impressive of its approaches.

[1] Evelyn's *Diary*, 1645.

The modernized street called Ventidue Marzo, in memory of the capitulation of the Austrians on that day in the year 1848, leads us to the bridge and *campo* of S. Moisè, the most preposterous of barocco churches, where lie the remains of the financier John Law. The church lends its name to the next length of *salizzada*, which a little farther on becomes 'Of the Ascension,' since a church and convent with this dedication once occupied the site of the present Hotel Luna.[1]

A moment more and we are in the shadow of a portico, looking out on an avenue of symmetrical arcades; and these, as though "opening from it in a kind of awe," lead up to a vision of "pillars and white domes, clustered into a long low pyramid of coloured light; a treasure-heap it seems, partly of gold and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaic and beset with sculpture. . . . And round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stone, jasper and porphyry, and deep green serpentine. . . . And above these another range of pinnacles mixed with white arches

[1] The ugly much bemarbled façade cost 30,000 ducats. A church dedicated to St. Victor stood there in 797.

edged with scarlet flowers—a confusion of delight amidst which the breasts of the Greek horses are seen blazing in their golden strength, and the St. Mark's Lion lifted on a blue field covered with stars; until at last, as if in ecstasy, the crests of the arches break into a marble foam, and toss themselves far into the blue sky in flashes and wreathes of sculptured spray."

Thus Ruskin, in one of the most impassioned and felicitous passages of the *Stones of Venice*, presents us with an impression of St. Mark's seen from the Bocca di Piazza.

We cannot ensure to our readers the "blue sky," the clear sunshine, still less the artist's eye; and indeed we would warn them that a shade of disappointment may dim their first impressions, and that older and far different images, retained by the sensitive plate of memory, may blurr and distort this wonderful new view. The Piazza is strangely unlike the Dom Platz, the Minster Yard, the Place de la Cathédrale of northern Europe, and the white domes recall those of Eastern mosques or Russian basilicas, yet always with a subtle sense of difference. We are, in fact, in front

of the representative and typical church of a city which rose and existed under unique conditions, the creation of a peculiar people, belonging neither to the East nor to the West, "neither to the Empire of Constantinople nor to the Kingdoms which sprang up on the ruins of Rome."[1]

II

St. Mark's Rest

We step down into the Basilica where the old Venetians ascended; for, to avoid inundations—which still occur sometimes—the pavement of the Piazza has been raised repeatedly.

In the Atrio or Vestibule, we notice the exquisite carving of the capitals, and the red slabs in the pavement marking the spot where the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa knelt before the Pope, and in the early mosaics of the vaulting we read the story of the Creation, of the Fall, and of the Patriarchs.

To the right a door leads to a low room, "vaulted not with arches but with small cupolas

[1] Horatio Brown, *Venetian Studies*.

starred with gold and chequered with gloomy figures." It is the Baptistery, the Chapel of S. Zuan (Giovanni) elaborately described by Ruskin. In it is the tomb of the Doge Andrea Dandolo.

From the Baptistery we pass into the dreamland of the church—a rich warm twilight in which we are conscious of colour streaming upwards from the pavement, and outwards from the walls, trembling in the brightness overhead, or concentrated to a point of crimson light in the gloom of a side-chapel.

Little by little we perceive that the dim space has a shape, that of a Greek cross: that a nave with aisles is crossed by an aisled transept: that there is an apse beyond: and that above there are five domes, the largest in the centre, and one at the extremity of each arm. Then we realize that the brightness overhead is not only due to the daylight entering by narrow apertures piercing the cupolas, but to its reflection from a lining of burnished gold mosaics. And next we are aware that golden mosaics, polished marbles, and translucent alabaster encrust every inch of the brick fabric: that the pavement—undulating as the

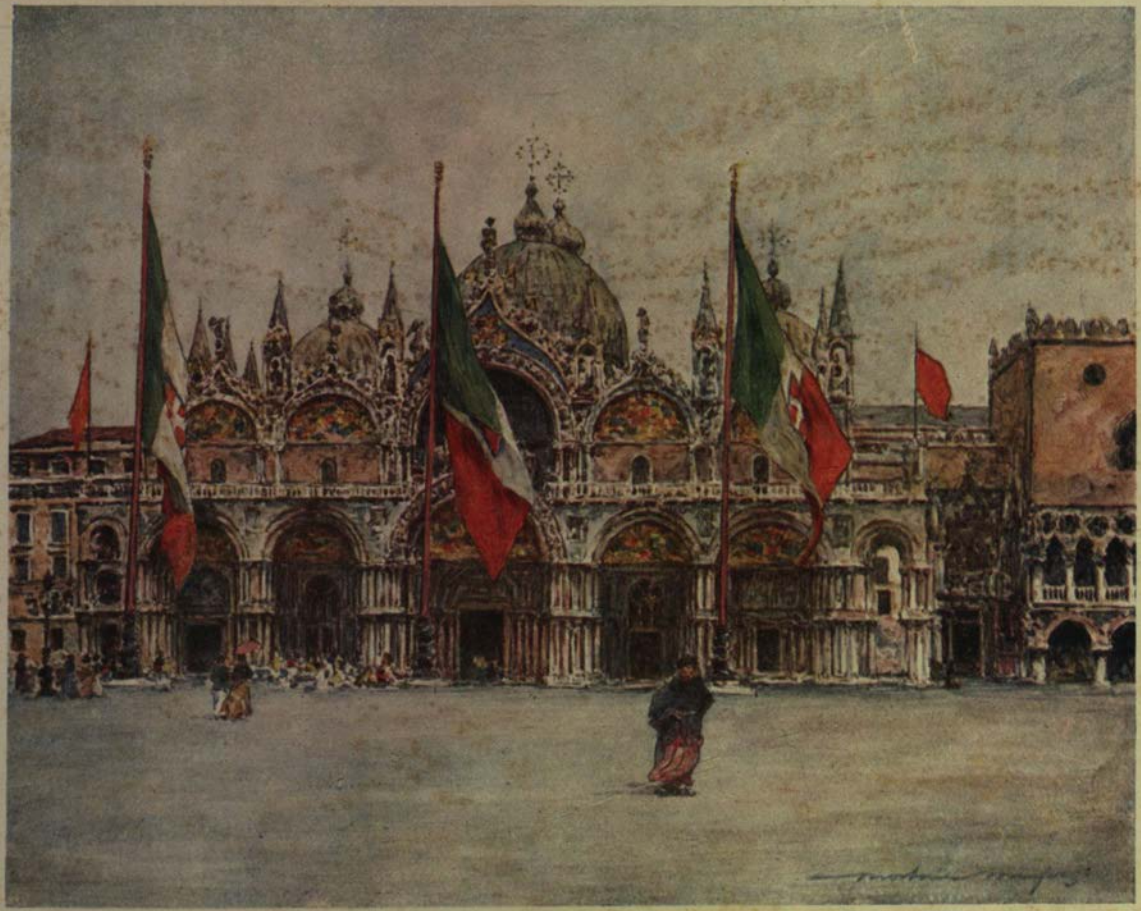
lagoon—is formed of a mosaic of peacock-hued marbles, and that "under-foot and overhead there is a continual succession of crowded imagery, one picture passing into another as in a dream."

It is impossible to disentangle this wealth of imagery—the far-famed "Bible of St. Mark's"—during a first, or an only visit. But certain salient features of the church may be grasped and retained. Our eyes, for instance, are at once struck by the two curiously shaped marble pulpits, and by the screen behind them. The screen is Greek, but the great bronze cross,[1] and the statues of Christ and His Apostles which surmount it, were erected in 1394, and are the work respectively of Jacopo di Marco Benato, and of the two brothers called, from the hard limestone—*macigno*—in which they worked, "delle Massegne."

The larger pulpit on the north side is octangular in shape, sustained by columns and canopied with a cupola. It is in two tiers: from the lower the Epistle is read, from the upper the Gospel. The

[1] At the moment of writing, July 1915, the cross has been removed, and the statues and all that is delicate and precious in the church is swathed in wrappers and built round by sand-bags—war precautions which, one hopes, may prove unnecessary or efficacious.

ST. MARK'S



pulpit on the south side is more ordinary in form. It is called the Bigonzo: from it the Doge used to be presented to the people, and the relics are now exhibited on Maundy Thursday and Ascension Day.

After glancing at Sansovino's bronze reliefs in the choir, which tell the story of St. Mark, we advance to the High Altar which stands above the supposed relics of the Evangelist. It has a fine canopy of *verde antico*, supported by four marble columns with interesting eleventh-century reliefs. On high festivals the altar is glorious with a splendid specimen of Byzantine goldsmiths' work, the Pala d'Oro, which at other times can be uncovered and viewed on payment of 50 centimes.

Behind the Altare Maggiore we turn to the left into the Sacristy, adorned with mosaics and some fine *intarsiatura*. But we shall be arrested rather by the small bronze door through which we enter than by the *Sagrestia* itself. It is the work of Sansovino, who has introduced into his reliefs portraits of his contemporaries, including Titian and Aretino.

Returning to the nave we may pass into the

transept to our right (to the left when we face the high altar). At the end of it are two chapels, of which the larger was built to receive the body of S. Isidore by that Doge Andrea Dandolo who lies in the Baptistery. The sacred bones had been stolen from Chios in 1125, and had prudently been allowed to lie *perdus* for two centuries, till at length with pomp and circumstance they were placed in a new tomb and chapel. The story of S. Isidore's life and surreptitious translation is told in the mosaics above the tomb. Before turning back to the nave we should glance at the chapel next to S. Isidore, the lovely little Capella dei Mascoli.

Before leaving the church we should ascend the little staircase on the right of the principal entrance door and spend at least a few moments in the gallery. From this elevation the mosaics of the domes are seen more easily than from below, and very beautiful views of the choir are obtained.

It is needless to say that we shall not *know* St. Mark's when we descend that staircase. We have been ushered into the presence, have made our bow and kissed hands—that is all. The act

of homage must often be renewed if "knowledge is to grow from more to more."

We need not be afraid of satiety, of indifference bred of intimacy, for the moods and aspects of both church and city are incalculable and inexhaustible. The morning light is other than that of evening, alike on the surface of mosaics and lagoons. Midsummer mid-day sunshine capriciously unshrouds some figure upon wall or cupola, just as dawn and sunset now and then disclose the mountain shapes upon the far horizon. The opening of a door awakes a flash of colour, even as a gleam from a riven storm-cloud strikes a sail into flame; and the swaying of a sanctuary lamp, like the emergence of the moon, gives tremulous prominence to some hitherto unnoticeable form. There are mornings when the Piazza seems to laugh in crisp brilliancy of frosty sunshine, and when the whole structure of St. Mark's seems to throb and glow in response to a high ceremony or festal procession; and there are sirocco days when the heavy pearly greyness of sky and water pervades the church, and damp steams up between the marbles of the floor as from the flag-

stones of *calli* and *campi*. Those who are most intimate with the unique city and church will most emphatically protest that close acquaintance cannot "stale" the "infinite variety" of either.

III

The Wonders of the Piazza

"We spent by far the greater part of our time in going to the Piazza," wrote Howells in his chapter on *Our Last Year in Venice*. "If the morning were long we went to Piazza; if we did not know what to do with the afternoon we went to Piazza; if we had friends with us we went to Piazza; if we were alone we went to Piazza; and there was no mood or circumstance in which it did not seem a natural fitting thing to go to Piazza."

The social habits and aspects of the Piazza have changed much since Howells wrote in days of Austrian rule, but this passage remains a perfect description of the customary attitude of Venetians and of foreign residents in Venice. The woman of the people does not feel a *festa* complete unless she

A WOMAN OF THE PEOPLE

has been in Piazza to hear the band ; and there is something wrong with the health or heart of the Venetian *elegante* who does not on a winter morning take a turn in the sunny square before *seconda colazione.* Venetian patricians linger in Piazza before entering the fashionable club ; and men whose place of business is not far distant adjourn to Piazza to take a cup of coffee in the sunshine after their mid-day meal. Pretty children, accompanied by handsome, much be-ribboned *balie* from the Friuli, enjoy the freedom of the biggest open-air space in Venice ; and visitors, chiefly English and American, frequent Lavena's tea-rooms at five o'clock, and at all hours gaze into the windows where lace, jewellery, beads and glass are displayed.

In bygone days of difficult and dangerous travel the Piazza was the meeting-place of merchants from East and West. "Forum Orbis non Urbis" : it remains "le premier salon de la terre" (Michelet). Its device is Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity ; but it maintains a singular degree of order, and inspires complete good breeding. On hot summer evenings when the band plays, and chairs and tables are spread far out on the pavement in front of the

cafés, it becomes the most democratic spot in Europe, and at the trifling cost of a cup of black coffee, a "limonata" or a glass of iced syrup, the *forestiere* may buy a surpassing opportunity for "the proper study of mankind" and the nice discernment of national traits. For here, in a proximity unknown and impossible in London or New York, Paris or Berlin, are gathered men and women of all kindreds and tongues, of all sorts and conditions; and all, without distinction of degree or race, are enjoying the same simple luxuries, flavoured with music, gossip, and flirtation.

After eleven o'clock the Piazza empties, and though the famous Café Florian has not closed for three hundred years, its night work is insignificant save on special occasions. Once indeed the writers saw it as crowded at two o'clock in the night as on any festal evening. A brief but sharp earthquake shock, coming after the terrible catastrophe in Sicily, had caused a rush to the largest attainable open space, and when the first terror had subsided cold was felt, and hot drinks desired.

By day, especially in warm weather, the Piazza is emptied between one and two o'clock, and we

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

may then find amusement in watching the glossy prosperous pigeons who comport themselves as its rightful occupants. Whether the ancestors of these birds were the survivors of pigeons thrown with shackled legs to the crowd as a Palm Sunday largess, or whether, as some writers maintain, they were the carriers of important news to the crusader Enrico Dandolo when he was besieging Candia, it is certain that "St. Mark's Doves" enjoy a privileged and prosperous existence in modern Venice ; and the vendors of pennyworths of corn for their consumption benefit with them by the liberality of *forestieri.*

In this quiet hour, having purchased at the price of a *caffè nero* the right to an hour's repose in the shadow of the "portici," we may try to think ourselves back into the days when the Piazza was a grass-grown semi-cultivated garden, a *broglio* to use the dialect of the time, and the property of the wealthy nuns of S. Zaccaria, who generously made it over to the Doge Ziani to form a *campo* for the ducal chapel and restored palace. It was, however, but half its present length, and had for a western boundary a Rio which discharged into

the Grand Canal. On the bank of this Rio, facing St. Mark's, stood a little church dedicated to S. Geminiano; and on the spot where the Campanile now rises was a big elder tree to which the horses of the Doge's councillors could be tethered.

The aspect of the Square at a later date can be recalled with less mental effort and more precision. We have but to turn into the photographer's and buy a post-card reproduction of Gentile Bellini's picture of a Procession crossing the Piazza, painted in 1498, to know exactly how the Heart of Venice appeared to the painter's contemporaries. The old Rio had been filled up, the Church of S. Geminiano had been rebuilt farther back, and the grassy *broglio* had become the paved oblong Piazza we see to-day. That noble line of buildings, too, on the north side, "rail'd with stone and thick-set with excellent statues" (Evelyn), had already been built for the Procurators of the Republic by Pietro Lombardi and Bartolomeo Buono of Bergamo.

In Bellini's picture the irregular buildings on the south side of the Square are in a line with the Campanile, the house actually adjoining it being the hospital built for the poor of Venice by the

Doge Pietro Orseolo. Seventy years after Bellini's death the patients were removed to S. Gallo, and the hospital and dwelling-houses beyond it were pulled down. The new line of buildings was drawn farther back, widening the Piazza by sixty feet. It was designed by Scamozzi to correspond with the Procuratie Vecchie, to which, however, it is vastly inferior; and, though over three hundred years old, is still known as the Procuratie Nuove.

In 1556 a new church dedicated to S. Geminiano was built at the west end of the Piazza by Sansovino, who was buried therein. Later it was joined at either side by extensions of the two Procuratie. These, when the Procuratie Nuove were appropriated for a royal residence, were required to form a wing of the palace, and the church, pronounced by the *Forestiere Illuminato* one of the most beautiful in Venice, was demolished.

The widening of the Piazza, though doubtless conducive to public convenience, is to be regretted from an æsthetic point of view. The old narrow oblong was more obviously the outer court of the Temple, and disclosed St. Mark's in better perspective; while the Campanile, as the termination

of a line of buildings, rose dominant but not over-obtrusive. In its present isolated position the great bell-tower seems a derelict sentinel; and St. Mark's, already dwarfed by the imposing Procuratie and by repeated liftings of the pavement level of the Square, appears to crouch, awe-struck, beneath its gaze — such, at least, is the feeling of a foreigner, who has not the passionate affection of the Venetian[1] for a dear familiar personality, and who has seen the Piazza with, without, and again with its Campanile.

No one, however, can deny that the city seen afar off from the water lost much by the absence of the tall, characteristic streak of the bell-tower; while the view from its summit was not a thing to be forgone without regret. Looking from that high post of vantage down upon the six white domes below, we realise St. Mark's as the chapel of the Ducal Palace, and as our glance sweeps outwards to the glistening band of Alps upon the far horizon, we understand for the first time the peculiar shape and situation of the city with its adjacent islands and protecting *lidi*. There is,

[1] The populace mourned for the fallen Campanile as for a departed friend, and actually spoke of it "el nostro povaro morto."

however, a curious omission in the map outstretched below: the projecting roofs hide from us all canals but the Canalazzo, and Venice appears without her water-ways.

This unique view is now brought within reach of the feeblest tourist. The old tower, which quietly sat down in the July of 1902, was ascended by an easy stepless path.[1] This incline has been conscientiously reproduced, but a lift has also been installed. It is the single deviation from the original model, and its introduction is defended by the argument that had lifts been invented in the early *cinquecento*—when the old Campanile was completed—the Venetians would have availed themselves of the convenience.

The archæological care and knowledge, and the engineering skill, with which the restoration has been carried out, may well cause us to add the new Campanile to the distinctive Wonders of the Piazza enumerated in the old Venetian quatrain:

> In Piazza San Marco ghe xè tre standardi,
> Ghe xè quatro cavai che par che i svola,
> Ghe xè un relogio che 'l par una tore,
> Ghe xè do mori che bate le ore.

[1] A French king is said to have ridden up on horseback.

(In St. Mark's Place there are three standards, there are four horses that seem to fly, there is a clock that seems a tower, there are two Moors who beat the hours.)

Wonder the first, the Standards, have highly decorated bases, designed by Leopardi in 1505. It is commonly asserted that they commemorate the conquests of Candia, Cyprus, and the Morea; but it is certain that long before the Republic could have flown the flags of the three subject peoples there were in the Piazza three tall wooden masts called Abbati from which used to fly the standards of St. Mark's. From them on Sundays and *festas* now float the red, green, and white colours of United Italy, giving an almost chromo-lithographic brilliancy to the scene.

The Torre dell' Orologio ends the line of buildings on the north side of the Piazza. It was built in 1496, at a cost of six thousand ducats, by a master-builder of Bergamo, to receive the clock, which Gian Paolo Rainieri of Reggio and his son had been commissioned three years earlier to design and execute. The clock not only marks on its big blue and gold dial the hours, the zodiacal signs, the phases of the moon, the month and day of the

HUMBLE QUARTERS

year, but is contrived to set in motion on the stage or floor above it certain life-sized figures. On this stage is a gilded statue of the Madonna standing on a projecting base, with two doors on either side of her. Above, again, comes the real tower, detached from and rising above the line of the Procuratie Vecchie. On it, in half-relief, are a lion and a kneeling Doge, on a field of starred azure. The clock-tower is surmounted by "the two Moors who beat the hours"—huge bronze figures who strike alternately with hammers on the bell placed between them. Evelyn tells us that once upon a time "the fellow who kept the clock" happened to "stoop his head too near the bell," and was struck so fiercely that he rolled over the parapet and was killed.

Evelyn also states that *daily* at twelve and six, "which are their hours of Ave Maria, when all the towne are on their knees," the figures of the Magi, preceded by a trumpeter-angel, come out of one door on the second story of the tower, pass before the Madonna, make due obeisance, and disappear by the other door. Evelyn's statement was probably erroneous. The nearly life-sized

puppets still perform their evolutions on Ascension Day, and since the celebrations of the *Sensa* were formerly extended over a fortnight it is likely enough that the activity of the clock-tower was likewise prolonged. The English traveller, writing at Ascensiontide, may naturally have supposed that it continued throughout the year.

The "quatro cavai"

> That strike the ground resounding with their feet,
> And from their nostrils snort ethereal flame
>
> (ROGERS)

are familiar even to those who have never been in Venice, figuring conspicuously in every illustration of the façade of St. Mark's.

These "four steeds divine" have travelled much since the days of their early youth, when they adorned, it is said, the triumphal arches of Nero and Trajan in succession. They were removed to "New Rome" by the Greeks, and were brought back to Italy by the Venetians as part of the immense loot of Constantinople. A curious anecdote connected with their transit is related by the diarist Sanudo. A Morosini owned the galley which bore them, and when, on

landing, it was found that a hind foot of one of them had been broken, he begged that he might retain the piece as a memento of his freight. The Senate granted his request. A new foot was cast and fitted to the horse, while the original, says Sanudo, "I have seen at the front of Morosini's house in S. Agostino." Resplendently gilded, they ramped for nearly five hundred years over the porch of St. Mark's, till the Realtine Islands were trodden for the first time by conquering battalions, and the great robber Napoleon carried them away to Paris, and placed them over his triumphal arch in the Place du Carrousel. They were restored to their old situation by Francis Joseph; but the passively resisting Venetians did not commit themselves to any expressions of joy or gratitude at their return.

The Emperor lives on, and the old ashes of hostility are blown again into explosive flame. It is interesting to remember that several weeks before the Triple Alliance was finally denounced by Italy, Corrado Ricci, the indefatigable minister of Fine Arts, was sent to Venice to remove the most precious of her pictures. He was, moreover,

prepared to lodge the Bronze Horses in secure stables. The pictures were carried away; the horses remained.[1] The Venetians could not bring themselves to part with their "quatro cavai." Let us hope that they may long preserve their hitherto charmed existence, and continue to contemplate proudly the banners of United Italy.

IV

The Piazzetta and the Palace

The Piazza has two prolongations. To the north it curls round the Basilica, becoming the Piazzetta dei Leoncini—a name derived from two marble lions placed there in the eighteenth century. It is important to Venetians as the approach to the Palace of the Patriarch,[2] to *forestieri* as the address of Cook's office.

The south extension is *The* Piazzetta. One corner of St. Mark's abuts upon it, and here are some curiosities worthy of attention—to wit, two richly sculptured pillars, and four male figures, and

[1] By June 1915, however, they were taken from the west gallery and lodged in a place of secret security.

[2] The title of the Archbishop of Venice, derived from the east.

a short pillar in red porphyry. The two carven pillars were trophies sent home from Acre by Lorenzo Tiepolo in the middle of the thirteenth century, as tokens of his victory over the Genoese. They once supported a gateway in the church of St. Sabas, supposed to be held in common by the traders of the two Republics. The short pillar which also came from Acre was known as the Pietra del Bando or Stone of Proclamation, for from it the laws of the Republic were proclaimed. The quaint figures in two pairs probably represent four emperors who reigned jointly in Byzantium in the sixth century,—though the popular voice of seventeenth-century Venice appears to have represented them as two pairs of brothers, who died through consuming the poisoned viands which each pair had prepared for the other.[1]

The most striking features of the Piazzetta are the two slender granite columns which rise like sentinels at its water entrance. One is surmounted by a figure of St. Theodore,[2] the patron of Venice, till 823, when the body of St. Mark was stolen

[1] Coryat affirms that this explanation was given him, as the one usually received, by the English ambassador Sir Henry Wotton.

[2] The original ducal church was dedicated to S. Teodoro.

from Alexandria by two wily Venetians. The other column carries the winged lion, symbol of the Evangelist. These two columns are the survivors of a triad brought from Greece in the days of Doge Sebastiano Ziani (1172–78). The third fell into the water during disembarkation and could never be raised: the other two lay upon the ground till a certain Niccolo Barattieri succeeded in erecting them. He was a Lombard, probably a master-builder of Como, and he had already made a reputation as the designer of the wooden bridge which then spanned the Grand Canal at the Rialto. When he was bidden to name his reward, he asked that gambling,[1] prohibited by the laws of the Republic, should be henceforth permitted between the columns. The rulers of Venice with their usual astuteness gave the desired permission, but at the same time made the place that of public execution, and therefore of ill-luck. Moreover, on a stone between the columns the heads of notorious traitors were henceforth exposed, and that for so long a time that, as the English traveller Coryat,

[1] The Venetian phrase "fra Marco e Teodoro," expressive of a predicament or dilemma, nicely indicates the history of the spot "between the columns."

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS AND STRAW BRIDGE

who visited Venice in the seventeenth century, feelingly remarked, "the smell of them doth breed a very offensive and contagious annoyance."

The columns stood originally close to the water, and in front of them was the boat where those who were sent to the galleys practised rowing. The broad *Molo* or esplanade which now extends from the Ponte della Paglia in front of the Ducal Palace and Royal Gardens is a sunny spot beloved of the children and the loiterers of Venice. On the site of the garden there stood from the late thirteenth to the opening seventeenth century a public granary.

The western boundary of the Piazzetta—to our left if we stand with our backs to the water—is a building so stately and beautiful that Palladio declared nothing comparable to it had been designed since the age of ancient Rome, while those who watched its construction pronounced it the masterpiece of its famous builder, and a work wholly "superiore all' invidia." It is the Libreria Vecchia, the Old Library, built by Jacopo Fatti called Sansovino, on a site formerly occupied by inns. In the frosty winter of 1545, before the work had

progressed very far, part of the building suddenly collapsed. The unlucky architect was dealt with in the summary Venetian fashion, and was only released from prison and allowed to resume his labours through the intercession of influential friends, notably the much feared Aretino. Sansovino died in 1570, and the Library was completed, with some unfortunate elaborations, by his disciple Scamozzi.

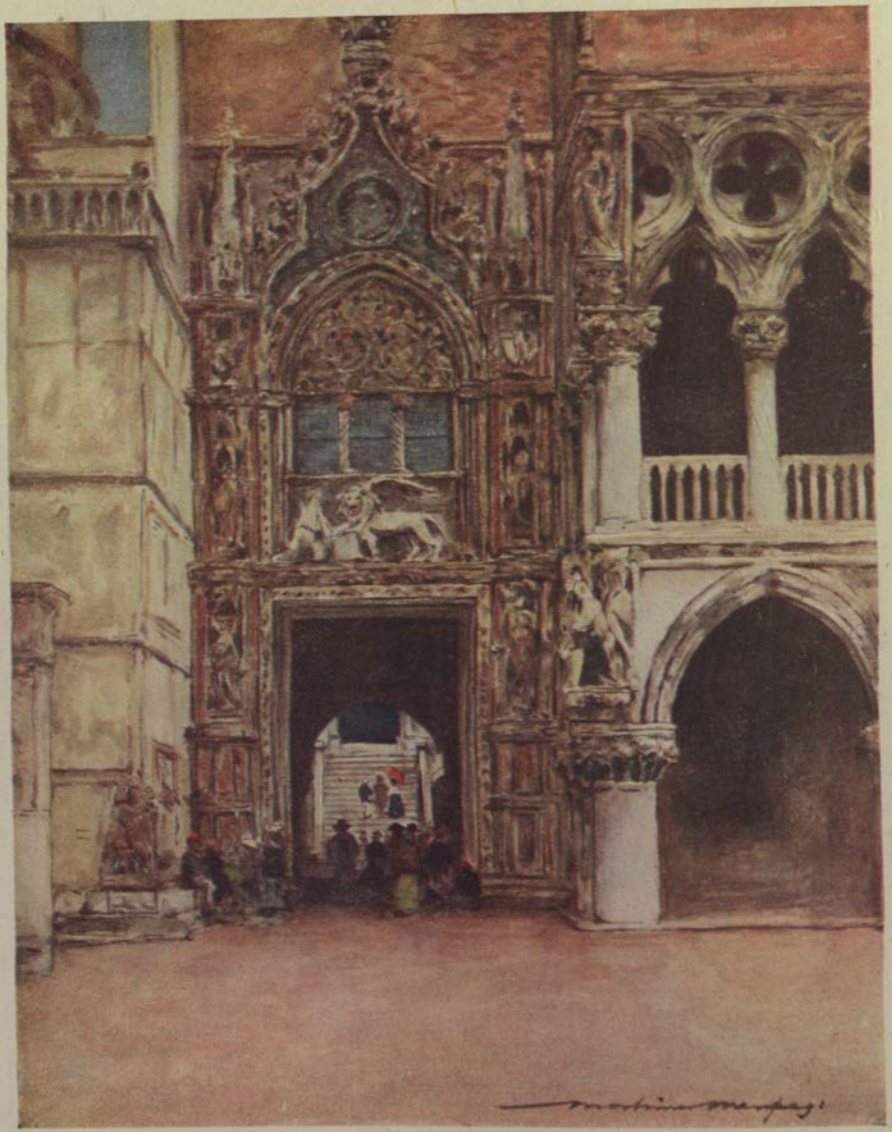
South of the Old Library, and abutting on the Royal Garden, is the *Zecca*,[1] or Mint, also the work of Sansovino, who, as a precaution against fire, built it entirely of iron and marble, using no wood at all in its construction. Within are two portrait groups by Tintoret of *Proveditori della Zecca*, and a fine Bonifazio—Solomon's reception of the Queen of Sheba—which once hung above the seats of the directors of the Mint, in the place, as Ruskin puts it, which in a London counting-house would be occupied by the commercial almanac.

The Zecca is now the home of St. Mark's Library,[2] which from 1812 to 1905 was lodged over

[1] From which the Venetian sixteenth-century gold coin, the Zecchino, or Sequin, derived its name.

[2] It originated with the collection bequeathed by Petrarch to the Republic. Its great treasure is the famous illuminated Grimeni Breviary.

PORTA DELLA CARTA



the way in the Ducal Palace. It is a delightful place of study; and those who have ever sat in the big general reading-room, or been admitted into the *sale riservate* for readers of manuscripts and rare books, are not astonished at Ruskin's lively envy of the directors and clerks who, in his day, were still weighing out "the irregular and battered coinage of which Venice boasts."

The eastern boundary of the Piazzetta is a building whose unique, unforgettable form, with its three tiers increasing in solidity upwards, is familiar to thousands who have never set foot in Venice: but only those who have beheld it year in, year out, in cloud and sunshine, on early summer mornings, on glowing autumn afternoons, on starry winter nights, can know the loveliness of colour produced by the chequer-work of red and white marble with which the brick core is overlaid.

Yet to enter the Porta della Carta ("Paper Gate") where the decrees of the Republic were once placarded; to ascend the splendid outside Scala dei Giganti ("Giant's Staircase") at the head of which, between the statues of Mars and Neptune, the later Doges were crowned; to pass up the Scalo

d' Oro ("Golden Stair"), once trodden only by Patricians whose names were written in the Golden Book; to traverse the great rooms where, of old time, were decided the destinies of the little state which played so great a part in Europe; to read the annals of Venice in the sixteenth-century paintings which adorn the walls of the series of great *sale*: all this is to perform a strangely melancholy act of sight-seeing. For this vast building, which was once the Palace, Prison, Senate-House, and Law Courts of the Republic; which reflected her sea-power and her peculiar form of government, which absorbed the skill of her greatest architects and painters, and epitomised her history and her imagination — this famous, wonderful, Ducal Palace is now merely an empty husk, a magnificent mausoleum. To turn into it from the Ducal Church, where to-day the same Sacrifice is offered, the same words pronounced, the same emotions evoked that were familiar to its first founders, is to turn from continuity of life to death.

It was Doge Agnello Participazio who created "the Chapel of St. Mark and the palace of his residence for the worship of God and the ad-

ministration of justice" (Pareri). The little group of buildings on the island of Rialto facing S. Giorgio was, however, greatly injured by the fire which burst out during the revolt of the people against Doge Candiano IV. (959–976), and though the Basilica was rebuilt by the next Doge—Pietro Orseolo I., surnamed the Saint—the less injured palace was not restored till the days of his son, Pietro Orseolo II., who made it meet for the lodging and approving examination[1] of the Emperor Otho the Great.

In the year 1106 it again suffered from fire "uscito d' una casa privata" (begun in a private house), but it was repaired before the advent of another imperial guest, and Henry V., who visited Venice in 1116, was much impressed with "the situation of the city, the beauty of its buildings and the justice of its government."

Did the Emperor, we wonder, perceive the unity of this trinity of excellence? Did he realise the solidarity of interest and effort which had bound together the first fugitives to the wind-swept sand-banks? Did he notice the resulting

[1] "Omni decoritate illius perlustrata." — Sagorrnino quoted by Temanza.

oneness of purpose impressed on the development of the triumphant state? Did he understand that the "situation of the city not only saved it from the envy of less happier lands," but from the consequences of internecine strife? Certain it is that in an epoch when burghers and freemen in other lands timidly wrested privileges from a powerful over-lord, crouched in the shadow of his castle, and bent to the arbitrary decisions of his courts, the citizens of Venice were enjoying equality before the law,[1] a voice in vital decisions, and the right to be elected to the Great Council; certain, too, that while the Church in other states grew powerful as the champion of the oppressed, the Venetians unanimously repelled priestly interference and lavished their wealth and affection not on the cathedral of the Bishop, but on the chapel of the Doge; and certain again it is that while the streets of other Italian cities echoed to the clang of faction fights, and "family-towers" proclaimed family

[1] Till 1294 the Council was elected each September, and its members were chosen from the whole body of citizens. "Earlier still than the reign of Ziani the population used to meet tumultuously and express their opinion upon matters of public interest, such as the election of a Doge or a declaration of war."—Horatio Brown, *Studies in Venetian History.*

A BACK STREET

exclusiveness and feud, the water-ways of Venice were the scenes of peaceful intercourse, and its inhabitants were competing in the erection of unfortified palazzi and joining in the decoration of the building which was the seat and symbol of the "justice of their government."

So blessedly secure was Venice "in the situation of the city" that towards the close of the twelfth century the Doge, Ziani, determined to throw down the wall erected in the tenth during the fear of Hungarian invasion. This wall, stretching from the Canal of Castello to Santa Maria Zobenigo, bent round the palace and chapel, cutting them off from the Grand Canal and Piazzetta. Its demolition enabled Ziani to "enlarge the Palace in every direction" (Sansovino), extending it southwards almost to the water's edge, and westwards to the grassy *broglio*, into line with the façade of St. Mark's. He furthermore altered that side of the building which faced the canal subsequently spanned by the Bridge of Sighs, known as the Rio del Palazzo.

At the end of this wing, and in the northern buildings adjacent to St. Mark's were his own

private apartments, and those of all subsequent Doges;[1] and there, in 1177, Venice lodged her third imperial guest, Frederick Barbarossa. It is worth noting, as one of the many ways in which the Palazzo Ducale expressed the temper of the State, that the residence of the Head of the Republic was the most retired and the least attractive and sumptuous portion of the building, the more prominent and decorative parts being reserved for public functions. The only part of the Ducal residence occupying a principal façade was the stables, situated on the *loggia terrena*, that is at the back of the lower arched arcade, with doors opening on to the Piazzetta: and since the Doge's horses were used chiefly for pomp and ceremony, and with them were kept "six beautiful coursers" for the use of conspicuous "servants of the State," these stalls very properly formed a part of the Palazzo Publico.

No plan or picture remains to show us the shape and aspect of the Palace in its Byzantine phases; yet we may feel sure that the one great Byzantine Palazzo in Venice, now the Museo Civico, reproduces in little the Ducal Palace of Ziani, and

[1] Now the Museo Archeologico.

that both buildings were richly decorated with gold and colour.

The horse, in the twelfth century, was far from being the rare almost mythical animal that it is to-day to many born and bred Venetians. The unpaved *calli* made riding desirable; the flat wooden bridges made it possible, and prevented the passage of gondolas at many points. Members of the Pregadi and Collegio commonly arrived at the Palace on horseback, though a law of 1291 forbade approach by the Merceria after the third hour had struck by the bell of St. Mark, *i.e.* after nine o'clock in the morning.

The close of the thirteenth century marks a new epoch in the history of the Venetian constitution and therefore in the architecture of its Palazzo Publico. It would be impossible in this book to describe and discuss the causes, processes, and results of the changes known as the "Serrar del Consiglio"—the closing of the Great Council. It must suffice to say that in 1294 the government of the Republic was stereotyped as the exclusive rule of a certain number of families equal among themselves. The effect of this measure of exclusion

was, however, to increase the size of the Council, so that whereas it originally numbered but 450, in the opening *trecento* seats had to be found for 1000. Consequently, about the time that Dante, having reached the middle of life's pathway, was engaged in writing the *Divine Comedy*, "the energy of the aristocratic power of the Gothic style" was first applied to the Ducal Palace, in the shape of a new meeting-place for the enlarged Maggior Consiglio.

The new Sala, facing east on to the Rio, was finished and used by 1309; but thirty years later "non fosse capace"—was not sufficiently capacious —(Sansovino) for the Council, which was constantly growing in numbers and importance. In 1340, therefore, a commission of three was appointed to examine where a new hall could be placed; and this commission, altogether rejecting the proposal that Sala on the Rio should be enlarged and brought up to the Doge's apartment, recommended that it should be fabricated on the south towards the Grand Canal.

The work was begun in 1343, but was discontinued and fell in "great desolation" during a

terrible visitation of the plague. By 1362 it was, however, sufficiently advanced for Guariento of Padua to begin his great fresco on its "head-wall" ("in testa della sala." Sansovino). This fresco, having been injured by fire, was completely effaced by Tintoret's immense Paradiso, till a few years ago, when it was rediscovered and treated with wonderful skill and judgment. In 1400 the roof was painted with stars on a gold ground—the armorial bearings of the Doge Steno (1400–1413); and under this Doge the Ducal Palace proper was taken in hand, his apartments being "so small and restricted he could scarcely live in them, which is most uncomfortable for him."[1]

But the Great Hall proceeded slowly, for the times were troublous and funds were limited, and the old Venetians were too wise to allow a "lust of finishing," or economy falsely so-called, to interfere with a costly scheme of elaborate decoration. Thus the Gothic renovations and additions were spread over one hundred and twenty-three years; and it was not till the spring of 1423 that the Great

[1] "Ita parvum et strictum quod in illo vix potest stare, quod est in magno incomodo suo."—*Cronaca Caroldo*, MS. in the Marciana quoted Molmenti, *Venice*, Part I. p. 68.

Council met in the room, which is substantially the same as that still called the Sala del Maggior Consiglio. Its fabrication had brought into being "all that is best and most beautiful in the present Ducal Palace" (Ruskin), *i.e.* the Lagoon façade, and seven bays on the Piazzetta.

The position of the Hall is clearly marked from without. Above the two ranges of rich arcades built to sustain it is a flat wall surface, pierced by six traceried windows, with one large, beautiful window opening on to a balcony. The six windows are not all on the same level. The four on our left, if we stand with our backs to the water, are higher than the two at the right-hand end of the façade. These are the windows of the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, designed to let in a full stream of light on the gorgeous painting of its immensely high roof, whereas the space of the south-east side of the building is divided into two tiers of lower smaller rooms. It is a violation of external symmetry which no Renaissance (much less modern) architect would dare to perpetrate. But the Gothic builder thought chiefly of the internal comfort and beauty, and many of us

may feel with Ruskin that "the whole pile gains rather than loses in effect by the variation thus obtained."

Side by side with the magnificent Gothic alterations the remaining portions of the old Byzantine Palace appeared poor and shabby. There was a general feeling that renovation must go further; but the Senate, believing that it was no fitting time to add to the public burdens, forbade the project to be mentioned under penalty of a fine of one thousand ducats. Consequently, when both Basilica and Palazzo Vecchio, *i.e.* the building of Ziani, were injured by fire in 1419, the former was modified with diligence, but the latter was untouched, since "it did not please the Doge (Tommaso Mocenigo) to restore the palace as it was before," and no one dared to propose its demolition and rebuilding.

At last, however, there came a day when "the magnanimous Doge," unable longer to tolerate the disparity between new and old, ordered the thousand ducats to be carried into the Council Chamber, and himself proposed that "the Palace should be built more nobly, and in a way more

fitting to the greatness to which, by God's mercy, the State had attained" (Sanudo).

Mocenigo died in the April of the following year (1423), and the first sitting of the Great Council in the new Hall took place under the new Doge Francesco Foscari. A year later, in the March of 1424, "the first hammer was lifted against the old Byzantine Palace, and, as if it had been the talisman of her fortunes, the city never flourished again."

The Renaissance Piazzetta-front was made to resemble as far as possible the Gothic wall on the Lagoon façade. Beyond the angle, which Ruskin calls "the Judgment angle"—the carving on the capital of the corner pillar of the lower arcade, representing the Judgment of Solomon — there was built in two years (1440–43), under Doge Francesco Foscari, the Porta della Carta (the Paper Gate), so called because the decrees of the Republic were placarded there. The original figure of the Doge kneeling before the Lion of St. Mark was destroyed by the French in 1797, and has been replaced by a modern reproduction.

If any portion of the Ziani Palace remained up to the middle of the *cinquecento*, it must have been

swept away by another fire which attacked the Palace in 1479, and made it necessary to restore the wing looking on the Rio del Palazzo behind the Bridge of Sighs. The first architects of the time, Antonio Ricci and Pietro Lombardi, executed this work, which was completed by the middle of the sixteenth century. Thus, as Ruskin points out, the work of renovation proceeded completely round the central open *cortile*, and the work of 1560 at length joined that of 1301–40 on the Rio façade.

But the Palace was soon exposed to another onslaught of its eternal foe. In 1574 occurred what is known pre-eminently as the Great Fire, which destroyed those pictures which Gentile Bellini, according to Sansovino's severe judgment, had executed "more in order to efface the glory of others than because he could greatly improve on those he replaced."[1] *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

The Palace was left a mere blackened shell, and the leading architects of the time were summoned to give their opinions as to the safety of the walls

[1] Piuttosto per cancellar l' altrui gloria mosso da invidia che perchè egli migliorasse gran fatto le pitture passate."—Sansovino, *Litt. intorno al Pal. Ducale.*

and possibility of restoration. Palladio recommended demolition and rebuilding to designs of his own; but others, notably Sansovino, pleaded for the preservation and restoration of the Gothic fabric, and carried the day.

It was in this restoration that the prisons were removed from the upper story of the palace to the other side of the Rio del Palazzo. A bridge connecting them was designed by Antonio da Ponte, and was long afterwards yclept the Bridge of Sighs.

With this brief sketch of its history we must take leave of the Ducal Palace. He who will study Ruskin's admirable Chapter VIII. of Vol. II. of *The Stones of Venice* will find there information succinct, accurate, and picturesque, with detailed elucidations of the sculpture on the columns of the lower arcade. Those who desire further enlightenment, and who read Italian, may turn to Zanotti's four solid quarto volumes—*Il Palazzo Ducale di Venezia*—while Baedeker, or the little *Guida* sold at the entrance, will carry the traveller satisfactorily through an intricate piece of sight-seeing.

When brain and eye are wearied with detailed

information, imaginative effort, and wealth of visual impression, he will do well to emerge from the Sala del Maggior Consiglio on to the Loggia of Doge Steno, which happily escaped destruction in the Great Fire. There, refreshed by the breeze from the Adriatic, he may linger a while, looking across the Molo and the dancing waters of the Bacino to the lovely grouping of the building of the Island of San Giorgio, and away to the green line of the Lido and the far-off stretches of the peaceful lagoon.

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CHAPTER III

THE GRAND CANAL

"This is the Patriarch of all other canals, even as Venice is the chief of all other cities."—PIETRO ARETINO.

VENICE is divided into two almost equal parts by the curving line of the Grand Canal, or "Canalazzo." This, by far the broadest and most imposing of the city's water-ways, divides the three northern "Sestieri," Cannareggio, San Marco, and Castello, from the three southern ones, Santa Croce, San Polo, and Dorsoduro. The course of the Canalazzo, as any map of Venice will show, forms the figure of an inverted "S," rather crude and crooked, as a child might draw it. At each end it debouches into the lagoon, and in the middle of its course it is spanned by the splendid arch of the Rialto Bridge, marking the spot which formed for many centuries

ENTRANCE TO THE GRAND CANAL

the seat of government and is still the centre of the serious commercial life of Venice.

The north-eastern end of the Canal is now more business-like than picturesque. The charming environs of Sant' Andrea, which, within living memory, attracted and inspired the artist, are now dominated by the railway and its attendant docks, sheds, offices, and warehouses. Between them we emerge by the Sacca di Santa Chiara into the northern lagoon, cheered only by a residuary touch of old-time picturesqueness on our left.

The other extremity of the Grand Canal forms one of the most strikingly lovely features of this loveliest of cities. To right and left, as we glide eastwards towards the Bacino di San Marco, our view is flanked by stately palaces, here and there broken by a touch of vivid greenery which enforces the fair colours of the buildings. On our right hand, the procession of buildings culminates in the lovely, fantastic pile of Santa Maria della Salute —"Our Lady of Health"—and dies off into the open water at the "Punta della Salute," the lower buildings of the Seminary and the Custom-House bringing the lines to a fitting termination. Beyond

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this, on a separate island, comes into view the fine outline of San Giorgio Maggiore. The left-hand line of palaces—now the principal hostelries of modern Venice—passes into the fresh verdure of the gardens of the Royal Palace, after which the eye feasts upon the wonders of the Palazzo Ducale with the attendant glories of the Piazza San Marco, the two famous columns of the Piazzetta, and a glimpse behind them of the great Campanile and the domes of San Marco itself. The buildings then stretch out to the long Riva degli Schiavoni, and on to the green mass of the Public Gardens, beyond which lies the island of Sant' Elena.

Between these two extremes of Santa Chiara and the Punta della Salute, the sinuous form of the Canalazzo winds like a colossal serpent with his green scales flashing in the sunlight, the twisted course lending the beauty of fine curves to the great water-way. To these curves is due the varying play of sunshine upon the buildings. Now a palace is assaulted by a frontal attack of light on its façade; now enfiladed from left or right by a ray which casts sidelong shadows of balcony, pilaster,

SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE

or encrusted ornament; and the individuality of neighbouring buildings is emphasised by marked contrast of light and shade.

The fine sweep of the curves brings back to an Oxonian happy memories of the "High"; to a Viennese perhaps it would suggest the glories of his "Ringstrasse"; to a Londoner, it may be, a heavenly counterpart of Regent Street. But surely no European capital, and no city of man's building in the wide world, can boast a street worthy to enter into competition with the Canalazzo. The charm of its water-mirror is shared in some degree by our nearer neighbours of Antwerp, Bruges, and Stockholm; but these northern cities cannot parallel the architectural and historical variety of the buildings along the course of the Grand Canal—a long pageant-procession, presenting to the eye the tale of the city's past glories wrought in stone and marble.

While the sweep of the curved course, now to right, now to left, adds immensely to the beauty of the Canal, it also introduces an element of perplexity into the beholder's mind. Unless the lines of the map have been well memorised, all

sense of direction is as quickly lost by one who steams, or glides in gondola, down the length of the Grand Canal, even as by one who traverses on foot the tortuous *calli* or lanes which intersect the city. The water-wayfarer has indeed, on a sunny day or a moonlight night, some advantage over him who goes afoot; for in these *calli*, for long stretches, no direct gleam of sunshine or of moonshine can force its way between the lofty and closely adjacent buildings. Yet with every advantage of clear sky and visible sun, moon, and stars, the effect of the Canalazzo's curves remains sufficiently puzzling.

If we are starting from the lagoon beyond Santa Chiara to traverse the whole length of the Canal to the Punta della Salute and the Basin of St. Mark, our course will first be almost due south. Opposite the Papadopoli Gardens, we swerve to the left, and move east with just a touch of north. Next we steer due east past the opening (on our left) of the broad Cannaregio Canal; then we curve gently more and more to the southward. After a sharp bend by the Fishmarket, we pass in a south-westerly direction under the arch of the Rialto

A PINK PALACE

Bridge, maintaining a south-westerly course till we turn south-east by the fine Palazzo Foscari. Here we change to our final easterly direction by the Accademia and the second Iron Bridge.

I

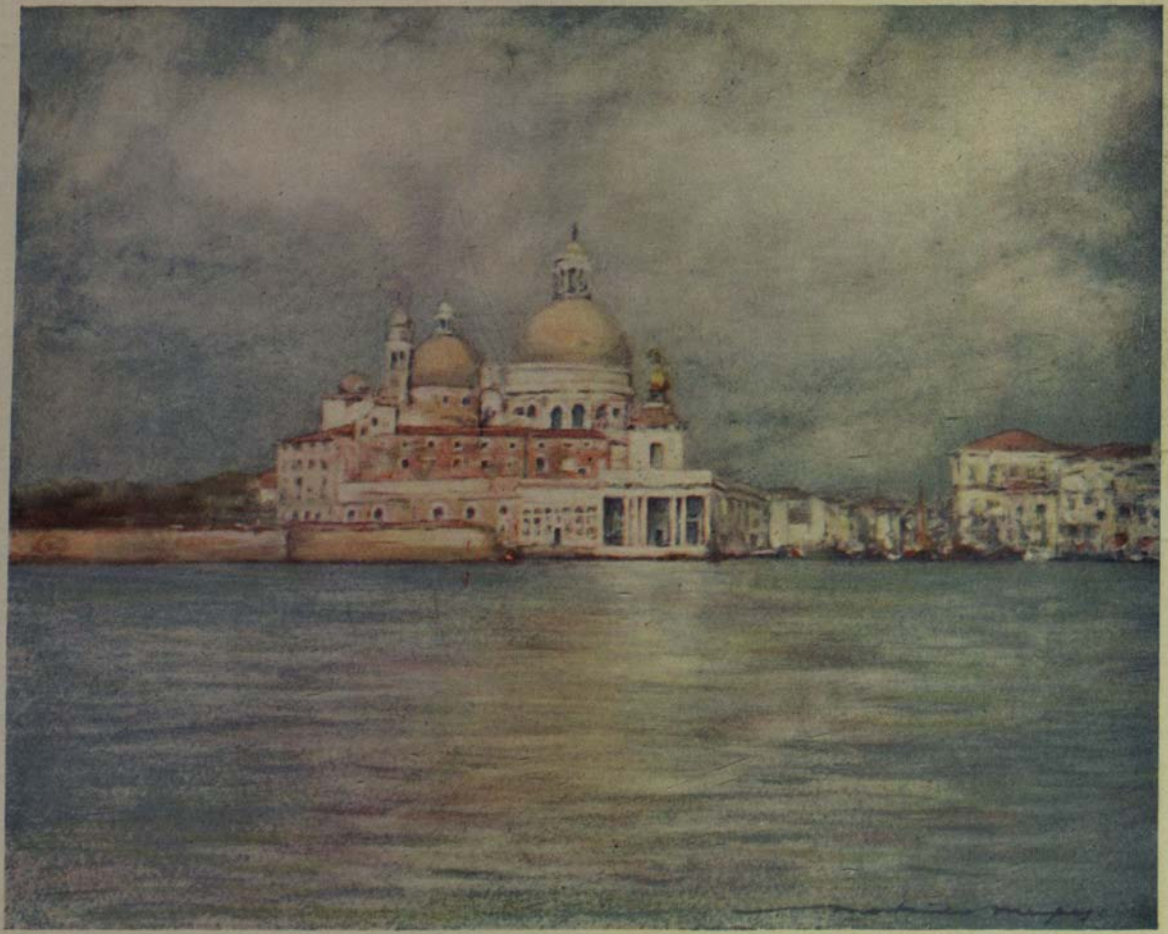
Once the main features of the course and direction have been grasped, the visitor is free to spend his time in examining the details of beauty and interest which meet his gaze in constant succession. It is hardly too much to say that every inch is full of interest. It will be worth our while to take a double trip, from the railway station to the Custom-House and back again, gazing steadfastly to the right on each journey. Unless "eyes right" is the rule perseveringly obeyed, the rival claims to the left will be sure to command our attention and to dissipate our interest. Of course, the full glory of the Canalazzo can only be appreciated after many trips, in many types of weather, and at many times of day; and in most of these the eye may well be left to rove at fancy, attracted, as it were, unconsciously by the most magnetic features on either side. But the visitor

can never get to know the Canal with any thoroughness unless he is willing to study its successive groups of buildings with systematic patience.[1]

As we start, then, from the railway station, we have on our left the beautiful Papadopoli Gardens, where formerly stood the Convent and Church of Santa Croce, which gave its name to the whole "Sestiere" or district. Then, just beyond the adjoining bridge, the Ponte di Santa Croce, stands a building modest and uninteresting in itself, but dear to the heart of many a British seaman, for in it is housed our English "Sailors' Institute," a cheerful rendezvous for those whose ships bring coal from Cardiff or from Tyneside to the port of Venice. Here they can get light refreshment, read an English newspaper, write letters home in comfort. Here they display their talent to each other and to friendly English residents on concert nights, and on Sunday evenings join in some familiar prayers, and sing themselves hoarse with mission hymns. After we have passed the

[1] Ongania of Venice published some years ago an "Album" of the Canalazzo—a continuous panoramic view, which is now slightly out of date, yet still useful as a record of the sequence of the buildings.

THE DOGANA AND SALUTE



Institute nothing strikes the eye till we reach the Church of San Simeone Piccolo, standing back on its flight of steps. An eighteenth-century "restoration" which assimilated it to the Pantheon at Rome has been too much for its modesty, and in consequence it is suffering (as a glance at its green dome will show) from "swelled head."

Then, after a comparatively uninteresting group, which includes, however, among its more modest components some ancient houses of the celebrated Foscari family, we pass the entrance to Rio Marin, a much-frequented side-canal, and one of the short cuts from the station to the central parts of Venice. To the left of the opening is one of the most successful of modern architectural efforts, harmonising well with its surroundings, the Palazzo Nigra, designed by Sardi, and completed in 1904.

Shortly afterwards the receding buildings form an opening down which we catch a glimpse of the campanile of the Church of San Simeone Grande. Farther on, a massive but low and squalid-looking building marks the site where formerly stood Palazzo Correr, which lodged in 1742 an ambassador of Charles VI. Then follows

a symmetrical group of fine buildings adorned with characteristic round-headed windows, the last of which stands as a monument of Italy's former wars with Austria in the struggle for national freedom, for the original palace of the ancient and noble family of Zen which stood upon this site was burnt in the bombardment of 1849. This was in the days before science had taught human ferocity to destroy a whole neighbourhood at once with high explosives. This family of Zeno or Zen is one of the twenty-four "Ancient Families" of the city, families which date from the period before the election of the first Doge in the seventh century, and are therefore by far the most ancient in Europe. Not a few of such names will come before us in the architectural record of the Grand Canal: Bembo, Contarini, Corner, Dandolo, Morosini, Tiepolo, Zustinian (Giustinian). . . . One of these — the Bembo — occupied in former days the next palace but one to the Zen, where now stands the plain mass with square-headed windows between two refreshing patches of green.

Now we glide past the opening Rio San Giovanni Decolato (in dialect *Degolà*), a side-canal

GRAND CANAL LOOKING TOWARDS THE DOGANA

named after a church dedicated to the beheaded St. John the Baptist, which runs almost due south (for at this moment we are travelling due east) and eventually joins the Rio Marin. On the left of this opening stands the gothic Giovanelli Palace, leader of a picturesque group of quaintly assorted buildings, high and low, which fills the space up to the "Fondaco dei Turchi." The campanile of the Church of St. John can just be seen, peeping over one of the lower roofs in this group.

The Fondaco dei Turchi is one of the glories of the Grand Canal and of Venice itself. Built in the eleventh century by the Pesaro, it was bought in 1351 for Nicolò d' Este, Marquis of Ferrara. In the seventeenth century Cesare d' Este gave it to Cardinal Aldobrandini, from whom it was bought again for the Republic by Doge Antonio Priuli. By him, in 1621, it was presented to the Turkish merchants as a depot for their goods. Carefully restored in 1869, and used now as a museum—the "Museo Civico,"—its façade displays the noble and graceful characteristics of the Italian-Byzantine style. Its interior, and the wonderful collection it contains, deserve more attention than it commonly

receives from English visitors. Once a year, on February 13, the anniversary of Richard Wagner's death, the Municipal Band, stationed under the Byzantine colonnade, gives to his memory the offering of a fine selection of his music. Wagner spent his last days in the *mezzanino*—the modest first floor—of the great palace opposite, the Vendramin-Calergi, at which we may look on our return journey.

The building which flanks the Fondaco dei Turchi on the left is an old granary of the Republic. Next comes a seventeenth-century palace and then one of the sixteenth. The former—Palazzo Battaggia—is adorned with a pair of obelisks or pyramids on the parapet, like the Papadopoli beyond the Rialto, and the Giustinian-Lolin and the Fontana on the other side of the water. But this is not the mark of identity of authorship. Two of these palaces, the Battaggia and the Giustinian, are the work of Longhena; the other two are from the earlier hand of Sansovino.

Before we reach the *campo* in which stands the Church of Sant' Eustacchio, we have the name of one of the "Ancient Families" brought before us.

THE HOUSE WITH THE BLUE DOOR

The last building but one before the gap stands on the site of a former dwelling of the Contarini, who owned palaces not a few, notably two magnificent ones which we shall see ere long, in the vicinity of the Accademia.

The Church of St. Eustace, Sant' Eustachio, syncopated in dialect to "San Stae," with its quaint little Campo and its *traghetto*, or ferry, adjoins the home of the senior branch of the Mocenigo family, one of whom, the Doge Alvise, paid for the reconstruction of the façade of the church in 1710. Within the church is a pathetic memorial of a miscarriage of justice: the expiatory monument decreed in 1623 by the Council of Ten to Antonio Foscarini, who had been condemned and executed on false evidence.

Between San Stae and the Pescaria, or Fish-market, there are two massive and imposing buildings, the Pesaro and the Corner della Regina. The former was built from Longhena's designs at the enormous cost of half a million ducats, begun in 1679 and finished in 1710. Less than a century later, it sheltered for a time the last Doge of Venice, poor Ludovico Manin (whose wife was a

Pesaro), when the ancient Republic fell before Napoleon Bonaparte. The palace is now used as a gallery of Modern Art. The other palace, begun in 1724, and now serving as Monte di Pietà, or Municipal Pawn Shop, recalls the name of the fair Caterina Cornaro, who became Queen of Cyprus, and in the days of her widowhood brought under the sway of the Venetian Republic that long-suffering island (which really never had a fair chance from the days of the Mahommedan conquest till it fell into English hands in the last century).

A queen at eighteen, a widow at nineteen, bereft of her son and heir in 1474, when he was but a year old, the romantic story of her stormy career is finely told by Horatio Brown in his *Studies in Venetian History*, a book which every true lover of Venice should "beg, borrow, or steal." The palace derives its name from the fact that on its site the future queen was born, on St. Catharine's day, 1454. Her ashes lie in the Church of San Salvadore, beyond the Rialto Bridge.

The less massive buildings which intervene between Palazzo Corner and the fine new Fish-

THE FISH MARKET

market include two of special interest: a Morosini palace, the most imposing of the group, which bears on its face the rich tracery of the fourteenth century, resembling that of the Ca' d' Oro and the Ducal Palace though somewhat earlier in date; and the other (unless the new buildings have quite swallowed it up!) an amorphous structure of little beauty or interest at first sight, but in reality a characteristic monument of Venetian history. This nondescript is the wreck of a thirteenth-century palace, of which some traces may still be descried in the two pointed arches at its base. The ruin of its pristine beauty is due, not to any Austrian bombardment in the last century, but to the deliberate vengeance of the Republic six centuries ago. The palace was then the home of the patrician Marco Querini, father-in-law of the famous conspirator Bajamonte Tiepolo,[1] and accomplice with his son-in-law in the plot to reverse the important measure known as the "Closing of the Great Council." Bajamonte was slain, his house razed to the ground, and a "Column of Infamy" (now in the Civic Museum) erected to

[1] A succinct account of the famous conspiracy will be found in Douglas, *Venice on Foot*, p. 369.

mark the spot. Querini's house was partly demolished in 1310 by order of the Council of Ten, and the remainder converted thirteen years later into a public slaughter-house. Since then it has risen in the world, and is now a poultry market!

We have now reached the Fishmarket, the new buildings of which—meritorious work in the Venetian Gothic manner by Laurenti and Rupolo—largely hide the shame of the poor wrecked Querini Palace. Beyond it stretch the almost interminable colonnades of the Fabbriche Nuove and Fabbriche Vecchie di Rialto: the former a nineteenth-century reconstruction of the work of the great Florentine Jacopo Sansovino, in whom Renaissance architecture culminated for Venice; the latter, *i.e.* the "old," only thirty-five years earlier than the "new," and almost of the same date as the adjoining Palazzo dei Camerlenghi—official residence of the Three Lords of the Treasury—begun in 1525.

In 1513 there was a great fire at the Rialto, which accounts for the date of the neighbouring edifices.

One lovely feature of this centre of Venetian

PALAZZI ON THE CANAL

life will inevitably catch our eye as we pass—the Erberia, or Fruit and Vegetable Market, which spreads its delightful carpet of colour in front of the sombre Fabbriche Vecchie. This sight made Pietro Aretino, racy *littérateur* of the sixteenth century, willing to forgo in autumn the delights of a *villeggiatura* on the mainland. "The boats I see from my window," he said, "are all laden with grapes; . . . there are gardens in the streets themselves: why should I want to look upon streams and meadows?"

As we leave the Erberia and glide past the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi, we turn quite sharply to the right, deflecting our course in a very short space from south-east to south-west, under the arch of the Ponte di Rialto, the famous Rialto Bridge, which links together with a solid stone bond the two halves of Venice. Till the construction of the two iron bridges in the last century this was the only spot where a footway had spanned the waters of the Canalazzo, save twice in the year when a bridge of boats is thrown across near its mouth, opposite the Madonna della Salute: of that we shall speak elsewhere. But here, at

Rialto, there has always been a bridge, from time immemorial, probably ever since the seat of government was established here in A.D. 813. For three centuries and a half a more modest city, consisting still, for the most part, of wooden buildings, was content with a bridge of boats. The first Rialto Bridge proper "was designed in 1178 by Nicolò Barattieri, and was carried on pontoons," says Molmenti. It was called the "Ponte della Moneta" (the Paying Bridge) or "del Quartarolo" (the Farthing Bridge), either because of the neighbouring mint or because before the bridge was built a farthing was the fare of the ferry boats. "In 1255 and 1264," he adds, "the Rialto bridge was rebuilt, still in wood, but wider. The new bridge was carried on beams and could be raised in the middle." That is the quaint structure familiar to many from Carpaccio's canvas in the Accademia.

The present bridge was begun in 1588, the year of the Spanish Armada, and completed in 1592. Its architect had, it is said, to compete with all the best men among his contemporaries —not only with Sansovino but even with Michel-

THE RIALTO

angelo himself—and was deservedly named "Da Ponte." The massive arch has a span of 91 feet, and is said to be supported on 12,000 piles of elm. Its breadth is 72 feet, and it bears on its bosom two rows of stone shops, linked by two arches on the square platform at its top; the lines of shops fringing on either hand a broad and stately flight of steps, and leaving next to the parapet on each side a narrower foot-walk for those who have no immediate interest in buying and selling, but prefer an unhindered glimpse up or down the Grand Canal. This is "the first publiq building" John Evelyn went to see when he visited Venice in 1645: "A bridge of one arch over the grand Canall, so large as to admit a galley to row under it."

And now, leaving the remarkable bridge which marks the original "Heart of Venice," governmental and administrative as well as commercial, we will continue our patient course towards the Punta della Salute, keeping our eyes still upon the bank to right of us.

The Riva del Vin, or Wine Wharf, as the Fondamenta in front of the buildings is called,

has no feature of special interest, save for the gondola groups of the *traghetto* and the life and movement of the mercantile neighbourhood. The first building that we pass, immediately adjoining the bridge—a seventeenth-century continuation of the lines of the "Fabbriche" we passed on the other side—bears out by its name our remarks above on the Rialto as administrative centre of Venice. It is the Palazzo dei dieci Savi, or, in full, "dei Dieci Savi sopra le Decime," *i.e.* the Ten Commissioners of the tithe impost levied by the Republic on property, trade, and professions. And the comparatively squat building a little further down, whose double row of seven square-headed windows surmounts a row of five round arches, marks the spot where the "Land Custom House" formerly stood.

The second group, after the first little gap, behind which stands up the campanile of the Church of San Silvestro, has a historic interest out of proportion to its architectural dignity, for here stood the residence of the Patriarchs of Grado, ecclesiastical Chief Shepherds of Venice, from the twelfth century till 1451 when Pope

THE CUSTOM HOUSE AND CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE

Nicholas V. merged the Patriarchate of Grado and the Bishopric of Castello in the new Patriarchate of Venice.

The new boarding-house styled "Casa Petrarca" is a modern erection of some merit, lending a touch of colour and of form to the neighbourhood.

The buildings which follow have no remarkable points of interest, but show the characteristic harmonious Venetian jumble of styles, till the Byzantine-Lombardic Basinello flanks the narrow opening of the side canal which leads to the fine Albrizzi Palace, out of sight round the corner.

On the other side of this opening stands a pile which proclaims itself a work of Sansovino or his school: formerly belonging to the ancient house of Tiepolo, now the residence of Count Papadopoli. Its garden, interposed between Sansovino's façade and the twelfth-century Saibante Palace beyond, supplies one of those welcome touches of verdure which are as oases in an interminable desert of splendid architecture.

Here, between the Saibante and another twelfth-century palace, lies the Traghetto della Madonetta, so called from a beautiful carved figure

of the Madonna and Child. The ferry takes one across to San Benedetto, and in the thirteenth century — for this *traghetto* like several others dates back some 700 years—it took its name from that Saint.

Next follows an imposing group, of which the first and finest, Palazzo Bernardo, is now devoted to mercantile uses by Messrs. Salviati, and the third, the Grimani Giustinian, is the work of Marco Lombardo, the famous fifteenth-century architect. The group is completed by Ca' Capello, flanking the broad opening of the Rio San Polo, a much-frequented side canal, which connects with the Rio Marin, and forms a direct route for gondolas from central Venice to the railway station.

Ca' Capello has an ideal position at the corner, its two fronts both exposed to the beams of the sun; and its hospitable memories are full of sunshine for countless English hearts. Here Sir Henry Austin Layard, the discoverer of Nineveh, spent the last years of his life, and here, for many years, was to be seen the interesting collection of Italian works of Art which that keen and discern-

ing connoisseur brought together, and intended to leave at his wife's death to the English nation. May the alliance now effectuated, as we write, between us and Italy smooth the much-obstructed path of those pictures towards our shores! While Sir Henry's widow lived, Ca' Capello remained a recognised centre of English and Anglo-Venetian society, the rendezvous where distinguished visitors to Venice were sure to be found. If its walls could speak they would have many interesting meetings of important personages to record: and some conversations, it may be, not without effect upon European diplomacy!

On the opposite side of Rio San Polo stands the palace called "Barbarigo della Terrazza" from the fine uplifted terrace which, with its decorative greenery, forms one of the most delightful foreground features of the view from the windows of Ca' Capello. This house was also, till the middle of the last century, famous for a remarkable collection of pictures, when its seventeen Titians, thirteen Giorgiones, and many other noble canvases passed by purchase into the hands of Czar Nicholas I. of Russia.

Next door to the Barbarigo—a family, by the way, which, though not of the most ancient of all, supplied two Doges in succession towards the end of the fifteenth century—stands a splendid fifteenth-century palace of the Pisani family, and thereafter we move on, ringing the changes on the architecture of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, past the opening which leads to the house where Goldoni was born, and the second opening, at San Tomà, by which one passes to the great Church of Santa Maria dei' Frari. Next, we pass a modest structure which bore till lately the very ancient name of Dandolo, then the solid sixteenth-century structure of the palace now known as "Grimani a San Polo," by which issues the Rio della Frescada, a side canal whose straight course leads to the famous "Scuola di San Rocco." This is separated from the next canal, the Rio di Ca' Foscari, by but a small group of buildings, of which the most imposing is Alessandro Vittoria's Palazzo Balbi, designed by that architect in the last years of the sixteenth century. This palace has a commanding position and a sunny aspect not unlike that of Ca' Capello.

PALAZZO PISANI

It stands slantwise at a bend in the Grand Canal, and commands a view of its waters southwards as far as the Accademia curve. Hence it bears a conspicuous part in the annual regattas. "Napoleon I. witnessed the regatta from this palace," says Colonel Douglas in his excellent little book, *Venice on Foot*, and "the stand for the three judges of the regatta has for centuries been placed between this and the next palace (Foscari)." The palace just named, which stands beyond the opening of the Foscari canal, is the finest of a very fine group, all of the fifteenth century. This building, which a sixteenth-century writer calls "the principal palace on the canal," was, like its next neighbours, built and originally owned by the Giustiniani family: from them the Republic bought it for an enormous sum in 1428, and after belonging successively to two foreign magnates, it was confiscated from the second of these, Francesco Sforza, and purchased by the Doge Francesco Foscari in 1447. Till the fall of the Republic representatives of the Foscari family continued to occupy the house, as did the Giustiniani family one of the neighbouring palaces.

During the time of Austrian occupation Croatian soldiers are said to have used it for their barrack; united Italy has transformed it into a School of Commerce. The fourth story, by which it overtops all the buildings within view, was added by the Doge Foscari when he bought it. The tragic story of his humiliation and death, after thirty years of glorious reign—one of the best-known incidents in Venetian history,—will always shed a pathetic glamour over this splendid building. Here died the deposed ruler of Venice—was it of cancer, or of a broken heart?—on October 30, 1457.

The next building to catch the eye after this noble Giustinian group—and it is rendered conspicuous not only by the stately proportions with which its architect Baldassare Longhena endowed it, but also by the extreme modesty of the houses which lie beyond it—is the massive seventeenth-century Rezzonico palace, dear to English folk as the house where Robert Browning breathed his last, under the roof then belonging to his son. Does not its brave mass reflect something of the poet's rugged optimism—of the spirit of *Prospice*?

By the side of Palazzo Rezzonico runs the Rio di San Barnabà, looking down which one catches a glimpse of the fine spire of the church of the same name, a thirteenth-century campanile which has something of kinship in general feeling to our northern Gothic architecture. The humble buildings beyond this *rio*, quite picturesque in their humility, soon bring us on to the next opening, the mouth of Rio Malpaga. These two canals, San Barnabà and Malpaga, are, as it were, twins. Each runs straight for an equal distance east and west, and then comes to a dead stop, and would be a *cul-de-sac* but for a little transverse waterway which links one to the other at the further end. Malpaga, however, unlike San Barnabà, has certain outlets on one side.

A graceful group of buildings follows the Malpaga opening, of which the most imposing is the so-called Palazzo dell' Ambasciatore, a Venetian Gothic erection of the fifteenth century formerly belonging to the noble family of Loredan, subsequently inhabited by German ambassadors, and now the abode of a distinguished Italian admiral and his English wife. Then an artist's

studio, fringed by a pretty bit of garden, rounds off the corner into the delightful Rio San Trovaso, surely among the most charming of all the waterways of Venice. Its very name is precious, if only as a monument of the audacities of which the Venetian dialect is capable! The canal, of course, derives its name from that of the rather uninterestingly restored church which stands on its western bank: but what of that church's dedication? Trovaso is a saint of whom the *Acta Sanctorum* is ignorant; he represents, in fact, in one "portmanteau word" the two martyrs of the fourth century, Gervasius and Protasius, the discovery of whose relics helped Saint Ambrose of Milan in a crisis of his life. The Venetian tongue could not be bothered to tackle the toilsome polysyllable *Sangervasioeprotasio*; "San Trovaso" is much prettier, much easier, and in every way convincing. Similarly, perhaps even more triumphantly still, another church's title was transmuted, and the ugly and really scarcely pronounceable Sant' Ermagora e Fortunato becomes a melodious "San Marcuola." But this is to anticipate our return journey. Rio san Trovaso

PALAZZO CONTARINI DEGLI SCRIGNI

has, as we have said, other beauties besides its name: notably the beauty of its opening into the Grand Canal, and the wonderful picturesqueness of the Squero, or gondola-building yard, towards its further end. The opening into the Grand Canal is flanked on the further side by the great Palazzo Contarini degli Scrigni, of which a tall annex is connected with the main body of the palace by a bridge of stone two stories high, over the Calle Contarini Corfù.

The huge mass of Contarini buildings which faces the Canalazzo consists of two palaces, one of the fifteenth and one of the sixteenth century. The branch of the numerous Contarini family which owned this pair of palaces is supposed to have been named *degli scrigni*—"of the coffers"—on account of their wealth. The fine decoration of the interiors witnesses to this wealth. Even the annex just spoken of, which has for some years been walled off from the main palace, and constituted a separate property, has lovely decorations in its *piano nobile*—rooms ceiled with carved, painted, and gilded beams; fine walnut doors in precious marble frames; a frescoed little

chapel as alcove to one lofty room, and another *salotto* adorned with elaborate cornice and painted and gilded pilasters, panelling the walls to complete the effect of the beamed ceiling. To reach this suite of rooms you have to ascend more than seventy stone stairs—the writer knows, having lived in the apartment for nearly three years—and to the kitchens and bedrooms above there is no access save by a spiral staircase, "scala a chiocciola," as it is locally called, of which the steps are embarrassingly diversified in height and width. Picture the skill required in a gondolier, or *cameriere*, to carry down without disaster from kitchen parts to dining-room a tray loaded with precious china and glass!

Another problem which such an apartment raises is that of the *tirante*. How are you to open the street door to every comer when you live some 80 to 100 feet above the street and have no lift? The *tirante* is a connecting wire furnished with a lever which enables you to pull a handle from your altitude and open the door below as if by magic. But there is a ritual associated with the act. Before pulling the lever you

PALAZZO DANIELI

thrust your head out of a window and exclaim, "Chi xe!" ("Who is it?"), and if the answer is satisfactory you pull. The orthodox "Open, Sesame," is the answer: "Amici." If a parcel has to ascend without its bearer, you let down a little basket by a cord.

This digression may perhaps be pardoned, because it illustrates one side of Venetian life. Many a family lives high up for the sake of fresh air and sunshine; and the tall palaces which were built originally to house several generations of the same family are now cut up into flats, to which separate staircases deftly introduced give private access. The Venetian prizes very much the privilege of a *porta sola*, a front door to himself.

But we must pass on, or we shall never reach the Punta della Salute!

After the group of which the salient members are the two Contarini palaces, we approach the open space of the Accademia, and the convenient monstrosity of the second iron bridge.

The Accademia, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, which now gives its name, for postal purposes,

to the whole of the surrounding district, stands on the site of the mediaeval church, convent and *Scuola* of the Confraternity of Charity, from which the open space is still called "Campo della Carità." The church is the oldest part remaining, and has been very little altered since the middle of the fifteenth century. The convent, rebuilt by Palladio in the sixteenth century, was restored again, after a fire, in 1630. The *Scuola*, or Guild Hall, is the part by which we enter. Its façade, of doubtful dignity, is the work of Giorgio Massari.

Into the building we must not enter now, but a further word may be permitted about the church. The interesting brick structure of 1466 stands where a church has stood for many centuries. Far back there was a wooden church on the spot, for which a stone building was substituted in 1119. Less than sixty years later a dramatic recognition took place within its walls. A man who had taken shelter in the convent and found employment there was discovered to be no less a person than Pope Alexander III., who in 1177 fled *incognito* to Venice from the

fury of Barbarossa. When recognised he was championed, and in due time reinstated, by the Doge Sebastiano Ziani. Two spots in different parts of Venice claim the honour of having sheltered the refugee Pontiff on his first night when he came disguised as a pilgrim to the city; and each has its monument to commemorate the fact. One is the portico of the Church of San Salvadore,[1] in the Merceria, towards the Rialto, and the other the Sottoportico della Madonna, which runs out of the Calle del Perdon, near Sant' Aponal—the name "del Perdon" witnessing to the Indulgence obtainable by any who will say devoutly an *Ave* and a *Paternoster* on the spot.

A more pompous memorial of the Pope's stay in the Convent of the Carità was the Doge's state visit to the Church yearly, on April 3.

Round the eastern end of the Accademia runs one of the widest and pleasantest footways that Venice possesses. It is a regular boulevard, running straight across the Dorsoduro group of islands to the Zattere, the sunny quay beloved

[1] See above, p. 58.

of English residents that faces the broad waters of the Giudecca Canal.

Beyond the opening of this "Rio Terrà Antonio Foscarini"—a name which proclaims the broad *calle* to be a former canal filled up and paved for walking—the line of palaces begins again. A green garden, on the site of a former palace of the Paradiso family, has on either hand a fifteenth- and an eighteenth-century palace, neither of which is without a certain dignity. Then comes the grim and plain Palazzo Loredan, inhabited now for many years by Don Carlos of Bourbon. Here is the little Campo San Vio, familiar to English residents as the landing-place for the English Church—a building unpretentious though not uncomely in its exterior; but, within, stately in its simplicity and inviting to worship. The altar with its picture of Our Lord, St. Jerome and St. George, has considerable dignity, and the great brass candlesticks, stately in themselves, recall the memory of illustrious donors: the late Empress Frederick, H.M. Queen Alexandra, and Lady Layard. The organ at the west end was originally an old English instrument, and is the

CANAL IN GIUDECCA ISLAND

gift of one noble English lady; the additions and improvements which have made it one of the most effective organs in north Italy are due to another. The windows are being gradually filled with heraldic glass commemorating famous Englishmen whose names are closely associated with Venice, beginning with Sir Henry Wotton, King James's ambassador, of whom we have had occasion to make mention more than once. The whole effect of the interior, and the modesty of the exterior, give our English Chapel of St. George a happy resemblance to one of the old Venetian *Scuole*, or Guild Chapels. The result is far better than it would have been had a modern Gothic edifice been thrust into the midst of the simple quaintness of this old Venetian *campo*. The little square takes its name from the small Church of San Vio (St. Vitus) and San Modesto in the far corner, a fane whose importance, up to the end of the eighteenth century, was quite out of proportion to its size. For it was on St. Vitus's day, as Colonel Douglas reminds us, that the conspiracy of Bajamonte Tiepolo was suppressed in 1310; and after the tenth-century church on the site

had been replaced in 1318 by a building in which materials from the demolished palace of Bajamonte were employed, "the doge and signoria visited the church in state annually on that day," till the fall of the Republic in 1797.

As we resume our journey down the Canalazzo, we pass first the rather over-ornate front of the Venezia-Murano Company's establishment, a transformed Barbarigo palace of the fifteenth century. The Company itself testifies to Sir Henry Layard's effort to revive the then languishing industry of fine Murano glass. The old Barbarigo Palace extended back over the ground now occupied by the English Church, which was actually shaped out of a two-story warehouse belonging to the Glass Company.

Next comes the imposing fifteenth-century Da Mula Palace, now owned by the representatives of the once famous family of Morosini.

The unfinished Venier Palace, whose ambitious basement forms just an elaborate garden wall for one of the most welcome of the green patches on the Grand Canal, always excites the curiosity of the visitor. Colonel Douglas relates its story

A SQUERO OR BOAT-BUILDING YARD

thus: "When Girolamo Venier made his will in 1733, his palace, which stood on this site, was in a state of decay, and he directed his heirs to pull it down and build a more worthy one. The old palace was pulled down, but the building of the new one was suspended before even the ground floor was completed. The wooden model of the proposed palace, designed by Lorenzo Boschetti, can be seen in the Civic Museum." Late in the last century an Englishman entered into negotiations for the purchase of the site, with a view to arranging house and garden after his own heart. Just in time, so it is said, he discovered that any attempted rebuilding save that specified in the authorised design would invalidate the purchase! In this garden, towards the end of the eighteenth century, it is said that the Venier used to keep a lion. Just beyond it the extremely plain warehouse marks the spot where another branch of the same family once lived in state in a palace adorned with towers. The towers are gone, but their record still survives in the adjoining Rio delle Torreselle, which here begins its tortuous course towards the Zattere. The Venier family,

though not one of the most ancient of all, supplied two vigorous Doges to Venice—Antonio, a great administrator, in the fourteenth century, and, in the sixteenth, Sebastiano, the hero of Lepanto, when the Venetians flung themselves upon the Turkish fleet with cries of "Vittoria! Vittoria!" and avenged gloriously their recent humiliation in the loss of Cyprus.

There follows a varied and interesting succession of smaller buildings, of which the charming Dario, the Wolkoff and the Semitecolo palaces are the most attractive—the last named a fourteenth-century erection beyond the opening of the San Gregorio Canal. Between this and the glorious little Abbazia and Church of San Gregorio is interposed the great mass of the modern unfinished Palazzo Genovese, begun in 1892, apparently at a moment when the vigilant committee of the City Fathers, which supervises such things, was momentarily following Homer's somnolent example. The outrage consists not so much in any architectural failing in the structure itself as in its pompous incongruity with the modest Abbazia, and the way in which it breaks the line.

THE ORANGE DOOR

Already in the ninth century there was here a church and an abbey dedicated to St. Gregory. The present Abbazia, whose wonderfully picturesque cloister court far exceeds in interest the modest front which shows itself to the visitor from the Grand Canal, dates from the fourteenth century; the exceedingly graceful church behind it from the thirteenth. It is sad to see one of the most interesting Gothic churches in Venice desecrated and used for secular purposes. There was once an idea that the English residents might obtain it and restore it to religious uses; but this was defeated by pious prejudice.

We have now reached the steps of the famous Church of "Our Lady of Health." Though to the trained taste of the architectural expert Santa Maria della Salute must needs yield to the chaste beauty of the neighbouring Church of San Gregorio, it is at any rate one of the landmarks of Venice. Baldassare Longhena enriched the City of the Lagoon beyond anything that could have been looked for from his Barocco period, when he devised this remarkable group of domes and cupolas, of curves and twists and spirals, and set it

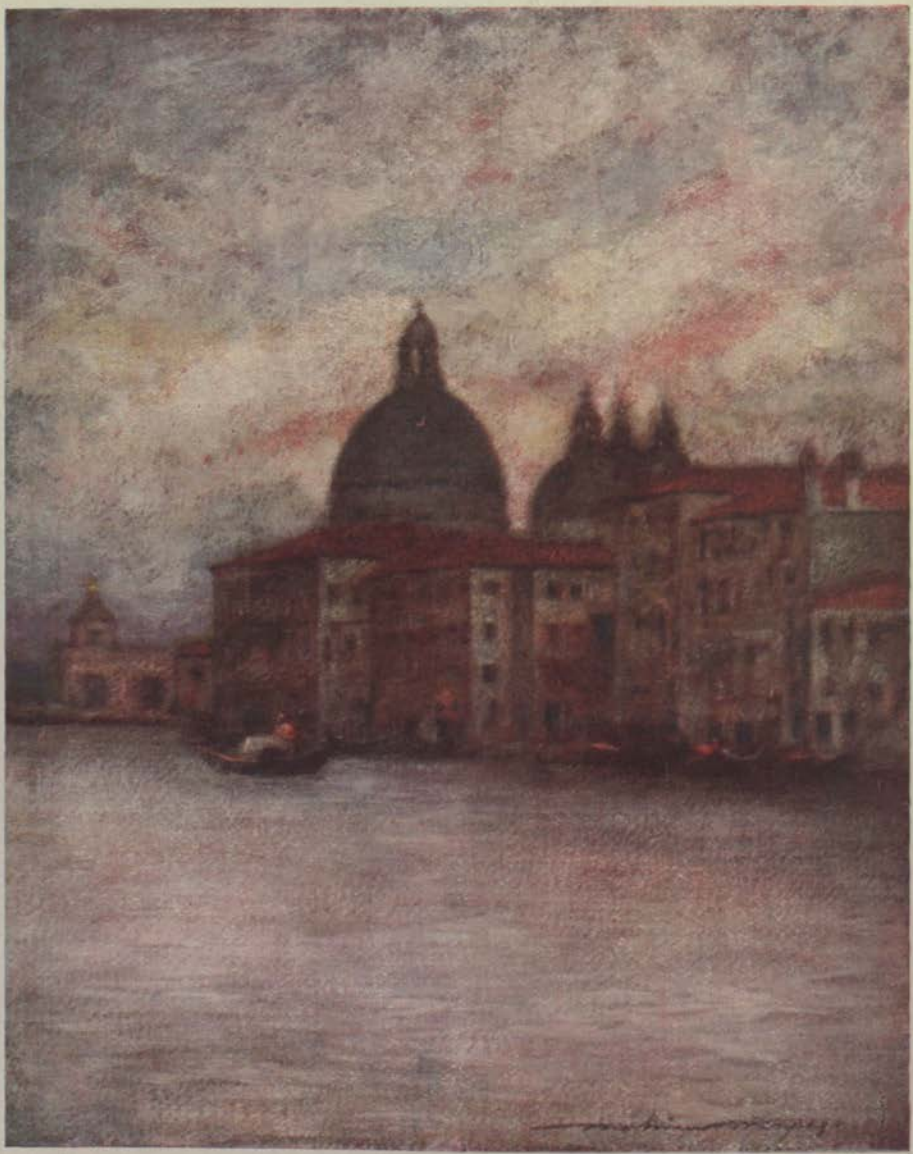
in the magic atmosphere which should lend it a faëry character.

The history of the building is epigrammatically set forth in the mysterious inscription on the pavement: "UNDE ORIGO INDE SALUS." The traditional commencement of the city's life was dated from the Festival of the Annunciation of Our Lady, and the same festival was chosen on which to lay the foundation stones of this votive church dedicated to her as the city's saviour from the plague of 1630. On March 25 in that year, after a special celebration of the Mass, this ceremony was performed by joint action of the Doge, Niccolo Contarini, and the Patriarch, Giovanni Tiepolo. Since then there has been a yearly procession (which is described elsewhere[1]) on November 21—the day when the plague actually ceased its ravages.

Adjoining the church, between it and the Custom House at which our eastward journey ends, is the Patriarchal Seminary, on the site of the old Convent of the Most Holy Trinity, originally built, so a local tradition avers, by the Teutonic knights of Crusading times.

[1] See p. 173.

SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE



The Punta della Salute which drives its wedge into the Bacino di San Marco, is formed by the buildings of the Custom-House, or Dogana da Mare, designed by Giuseppe Benoni and erected in 1682. Fifty years later than the "Salute" the tower which finishes off the long line of the palaces and churches on which our eyes have been feasting, is surmounted not by a figure of the Mother of God, but by a pagan statue of Fortune, standing in inconstant fickleness on the globe of this World.

Our view now stretches southward across the broad waters of the Giudecca Canal to the island of the same name, and when we have well cleared the Punta the eye can range back westward along the Giudecca's shore till it rests on the second votive church of Venice, and picks out Palladio's dome of the Redentore. Nearer, south-east of us, is the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, separated from the Giudecca by the Canale della Grazia and crowned by the stately outline of the Church of St. George.[1] Our English patron is also one

[1] Behind this church is the Canale Orfano where certain criminals were got rid of. The statute enacts that with hands tied and body weighted "he shall be thrown in by an officer of justice that he die there."—*Quarterly Review*, 1837.

of the patron saints of Venice: but a curious feature of his cult here is the "catholicity," if we may so call it, of its range. In San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice has worshipped always according to the Roman rite; San Giorgio dei Greci, whose campanile leans up at an apparently perilous angle far away on our left, in a side-canal beyond San Marco, has been devoted to the Orthodox worship of the community of Greek merchants ever since the Renaissance. Pope Leo X. conceded to them their native rite in 1514. In the little guild-chapel of San Giorgio degli Schiavoni,[1] further up the same canal, to which every lover of Carpaccio's pictures will make more than one pilgrimage, worshipped Slavonian merchants from Illyria; while our own St. George in Campo San Vio — "San Giorgio degli Inglesi" — shelters worshippers according to the Anglican rite of the Book of Common Prayer.

As the eye moves round to the left of the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, it strikes upon the far-away greenery of the Isle of Sant' Elena and the Public Gardens, then, farther still to the left,

[1] See above, p. 9.

PALAZZO MENGALDO

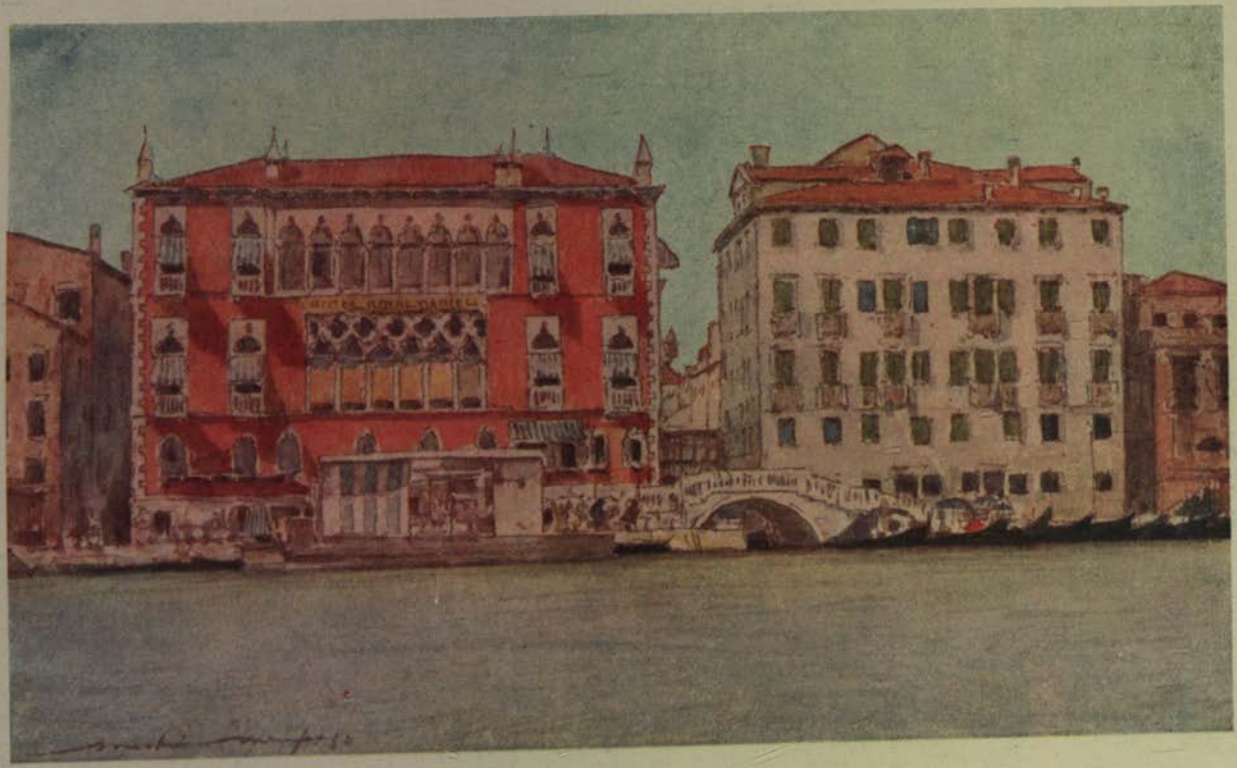
it is carried back along the nearing lines of the Riva degli Schiavoni, the Ducal Palace, Piazzetta, Royal Gardens and the familiar group of palaces converted into hotels, which stretches back as far as, and beyond, the point whence we are stationed, at the eastern opening of the Canalazzo.

II

We are now to make our return journey, starting in a westerly direction, keeping our eyes fixed, as before, on the line of buildings to our right hand. We may start from the first structure of any serious architectural pretensions, which is the seventh, westward, from the Palazzo Reale. The present Hôtel de l'Europe is an old Giustinian Palace of the fifteenth century. Between it and the much-frequented Rio San Moisè, by which one can cut straight across into the upper reaches of the Grand Canal, almost opposite San Silvestro, is the pompous modern German hostelry, totally misnamed "Hôtel d' Italie." On the other side of the Rio is a palace of 1680, with large round-headed windows one above another. Then follow

two entirely modernised piles, the big German hotel Britannia and the hotel Regina, formerly Roma. The old-fashioned looking hotel Milan, with its picturesque stone terrace on the flank, permitting a glimpse of the little garden, is succeeded by a rather plain building, Palazzo Micheli, which in the last century played a part afterwards taken up by Ca' Capello. The older among the present residents still remember with gratitude the hospitality tendered to them here by Mrs. Bronson, and her *salon* which formed a congenial rendezvous for all that was best in Anglo-Venetian society. This group of palaces, of which the majority, including as the extremes two fourteenth-century buildings, the Manolesso-Ferro and the Gritti (next to the opening of Santa Maria del Giglio), has a good many features of architectural interest. Especially charming is the little Palazzo Contarini Fasan of the fourteenth century, with the graceful open-work balconies: and a romantic interest is superadded to it by its popular identification as the "House of Desdemona." Readers, by the way, who are interested in the subject of "Shakespeare and Venice" should turn to Mr.

HOTEL DANIELI



Horatio Brown's chapter on the subject in the second of his delightful volumes of *Studies in Venetian History*. There they will find allusion to an ingenious historical setting for the play by Rawdon Brown, in which Desdemona is associated with the Barbarigo family. This might have associated with her name the Barbarigo palace which comes third beyond the *traghetto*: but no connection with the Contarini, as far as we know, has ever been suggested.[1]

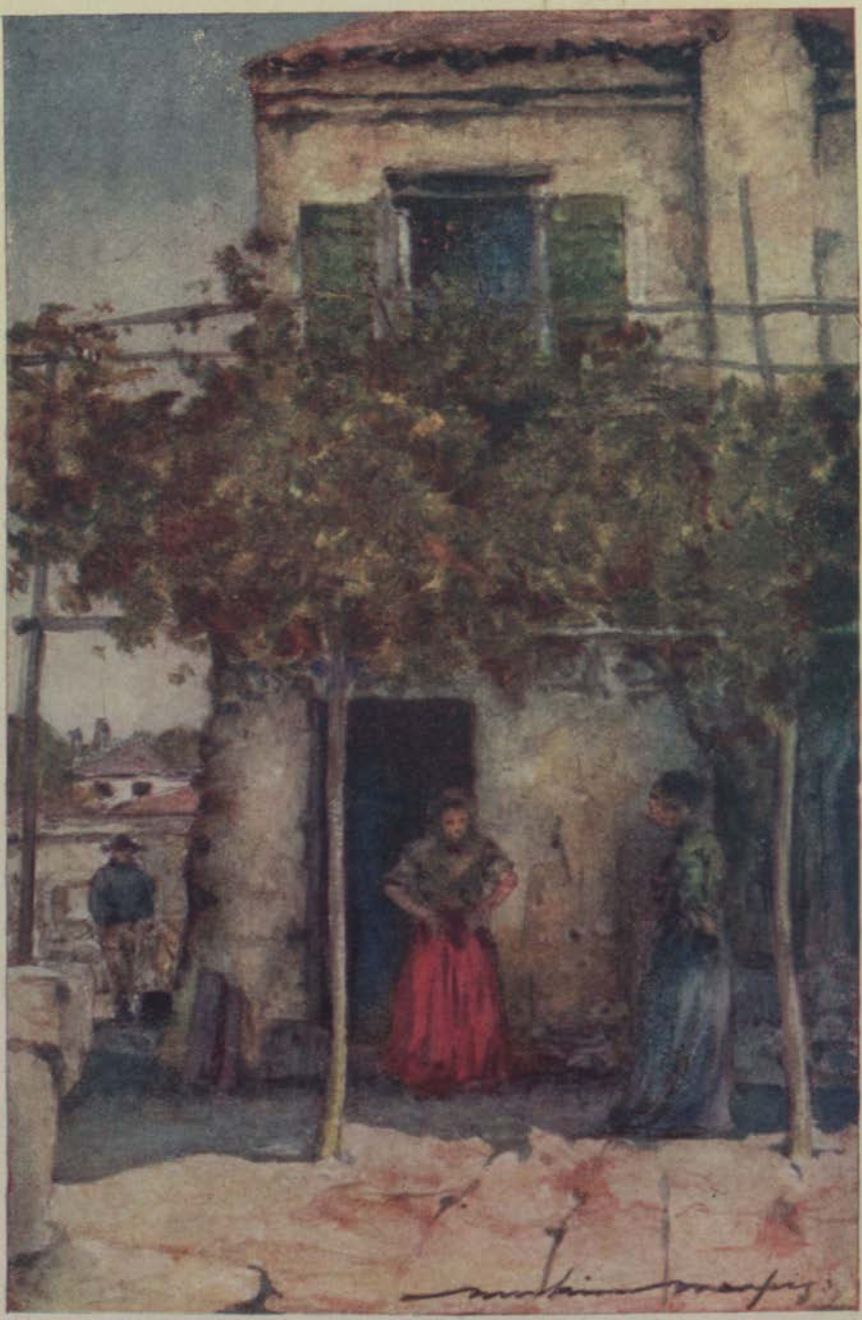
The Traghetto of Santa Maria Zobenigo (or "del Giglio") is named after the adjoining church, which has always had an important position among the churches of the city. "It is," says the *Forestiere Illuminato* of 1740, "one of the *Matrici* and has under it thirteen other churches. These *Chiese Matrici* were the baptismal ones; and Flodoardo calls them 'Titoli battesimali,' because baptism was only administered in certain churches, which were assigned by the Bishop for this office. . . ." The patronal festival of this church is the Annunciation — hence the title "Of the Lily." The other title, "Zobenigo" is from the ancient

[1] For another theory of Desdemona's dwelling, see p. 8.

family of Zobenigo, or Jubanico, extinct since the twelfth century, who founded the church about the year 900. The *traghetto* itself is a typical Venetian ferry, with its crowd of crooked posts for guiding and mooring the gondolas, with its wooden shelter with a touch of green creeper, its picturesque wooden steps leading down into the water and its little shrine of the Madonna.

In common with the majority of the thirteen ferries now plying, this *traghetto* between St. Mary and St. Gregory is a very ancient institution: formerly a close corporation "with its own guild-chapel and religious ceremonies, with its jealously guarded rights and customs—a sort of benefit club, with a monopoly of the gains accruing from the proceeds of the ferrying within a certain area. In course of time, even during the days of the Republic, the gondoliers of the *traghetti* forfeited one by one their most cherished privileges—forfeited them by their own short-sighted and insensate behaviour—till now the last relic of real independence has left them; they are simply servants of the Municipality, to which they are

A TRAGHETTO



responsible for the efficiency and continuity of the ferry service, by day and by night. But their officers—an annually elected *Gastaldo* at the head and four *Bancali* to support him—still bear the names which Mr. Horatio Brown has found in the old charters of the *traghetto* guilds, or *scuole*, dating in some cases from the fourteenth century. The *traghetto*, even in these degenerate days, when one of its proud members may be handed over for insolence or neglect of duty to the police by any irate foreigner or fellow-citizen, has still its elaborate rules of rotation and precedence, and, no doubt, its jealously guarded customs and traditions."[1]

The next object that compels attention, as our gondola glides westwards from this typical *traghetto*, is the huge mass of the building now assigned to the Prefect as his official residence. Nestling beyond it is the little green garden and glorified red cottage occupied by Prince Hohenlohe, with the fine leaning tower of Santo Stefano ("*San* Stefano," the Venetians habitually solecise!) peeping up behind. The *Prefettura* Palace is a work

[1] *Things seen in Venice*, p. 74.

of Sansovino, dating from 1532, and the branch of the Cornaro family for whom he constructed it acquired from their dwelling the epithet "Della Cà Grande." Passing by the simple but picturesque line of houses that flanks on each side the Traghetto of San Maurizio (from which one takes ferry for San Vio and the English Church), we find on either side of a little private Rio two really imposing buildings—the Palazzo Barbaro of the fourteenth century and the Cavalli of the fifteenth. The Barbaro has a delightful memory for not a few English folk, for with the fine hospitality of its late owner are linked the associations of his distinguished friends, the Poet, the Painter, and the Writer. The Cavalli Palace, adjoining Campo San Vidal, claims kinship in the elaborate tracery of its windows with the Ducal Palace at San Marco, the Giovanelli at Santa Fosca, and the graceful Cà d' Oro which we shall pass on the Grand Canal, beyond Rialto. And the Cavalli is now in the same hands as the Cà d' Oro; their owner, Baron Franchetti, has restored them both with lavish expense and trouble.

Campo San Vidal, into which the iron bridge

conducts us, widens into the broad space by which one passes to the extremely interesting Church of San Stefano, and on through Campo Sant' Angelo towards the Rialto. It is one of the main thoroughfares by land, and doubtless for this reason a councillor of the Republic ventured, as Colonel Douglas notes, to propose a bridge at this point as early as 1488—a year of years before the present bridge was opened in 1853! The Church of San Vidal, whose patron was the name-saint of its builder, Doge Vitale Falier (1084–1096), has little of architectural interest remaining, though the two Roman stones at the foot of the campanile antedate the original church. The second palace beyond the campo, as one proceeds up the canal, is by the same seventeenth-century hand as the Rezzonico opposite, but it lacks the dignity of its *vis-à-vis,* and the graceful imagination of Longhena's masterpiece, the Madonna della Salute. The quaint little Falier house, of the fifteenth century—in its way, surely, the most picturesque in Venice—has as its neighbour a building which, in consideration of its elaborate basement and right-hand corner, is called Cà del

Duca di Milano. "This man began to build and was not able to finish." But the failure in the Duke's case (he was the redoubtable Francesco Sforza) was not lack of funds, as in the parable, but a quarrel with the Republic.

A touch of green garden and a solitary seventeenth-century Malapiero palace, and we have reached the beautiful campo and campanile of San Samuele.

Venice is fond of Old Testament saints, perhaps because of her close relations with the East. We have passed almost within sight of San Moisè (Moses) when we commenced our return journey, and before we complete it we shall become acquainted with San Geremia (Jeremiah). The Church of San Samuele was founded in 1000. The oldest part now remaining is the campanile, of the thirteenth century. It is interesting to realise that this tower, and that of San Barnabà on the other side of the Canalazzo, are among the features on which Dante's eye must have feasted when he visited the city in 1321. The two massive eighteenth-century palaces, the Grassi and the Moro-Lin, need not detain us; indeed the latter, in its awkward

CHURCH OF SAN GEREMIA

"salient" position, is apt to be a dangerous neighbour for the gondola, in certain states of wind and weather, or when the wash of a penny steamer swishes through its lowest arcade! Soon there follows an unusually long unbroken line of nearly half a score of houses, which ends rather squalidly at the Traghetto Garzoni, next to the much-restored fourteenth-century palace of that name. The central members of this group, three in a row, are the homes of the Mocenigo family; the "Casa Vecchia" (next after the more ornate Contarini delle Figure, attributed to Pietro Lombardi), where Emanuele Filiberto, Prince of Savoy, and after him Giordano Bruno, lodged in the sixteenth century; then three joined together, called "Casa Nuova." In the middle palace of the three Byron lived and wrote in 1818, and was visited by Thomas Moore.

The houses which succeed Palazzo Garzoni include nothing of note except the Corner-Spinelli, attributed also to Pietro Lombardi, till we come to the Traghetto San Benedetto, whence one crosses to the Madonetta. Beyond the ferry the Martinengo (frequented by Titian) and Tron

Palaces form an imposing group, with the sixteenth-century Cavalli, reminiscent of its greater namesake at San Vidal: separated from the big Grimani Palace—now Court of Appeal—by the Rio di San Luca, the same frequented water-way whose other end we marked under the title Rio San Moisè.

The towering mass of the Corte d' Appello, designed by Sammichele for the father of Doge Marino Grimani, was inhabited by the Grimani family till 1806. It belittles its neighbours, the Valmarana and Martinengo, but it cannot throw into the shade the glories of the two next palaces, which the Municipality has linked together and adopted for its own official residence. These are both of them Byzantine buildings of the eleventh or twelfth centuries, and are among the chief architectural treasures of Venice, though both of them have undergone restoration at different times. The first (Farsetti) was originally built for the Dandolo family, and was inhabited by the great Andrea Dandolo before he was elected Doge in 1342. Just a little further on is the site (little more) of the palace where Enrico Dandolo,

conqueror of Constantinople, was born in 1192. We are now at the Riva del Carbon, the "Coal Quay," facing the "Wine Quay," in the historic centre of Venetian commerce. The whole jumble of buildings, big and little, between this and the Rialto Bridge is very picturesque. Two of these stand out: the fourteenth-century Bembo Palace, and Sansovino's sixteenth-century structure acquired by the Manin in the eighteenth century, where the last Doge Ludovico Manin died on October 23, 1802.

Just beyond the Rialto Bridge is a large building, now used as Post Office, on the two faces of which are still to be seen traces of frescoes by Giorgione and Titian, frescoes which Evelyn saw in all their glory. On this site was the establishment given by the Republic to German merchants in the thirteenth century: hence its name, *Fondaco dei Tedeschi.* After this, the eye may well feast itself on charming variety in form and size and shape and colour, only noting that the Byzantine house, last but one before the opening of Rio SS. Apostoli, is the birthplace of Alvise Da Ca Mosto, "who discovered the Cape Verde Islands, and shewed the Portuguese the way to India," and

that the largest palace in the next group, between the Rio and the open Campo San Sofia with its *traghetto,* is the Donà dalle Rose, famous for its tapestries. Beyond this variety is still the rule; and among the prettiest reaches in the whole length of the Canalazzo is that which extends from the said campo to the great "Vendramin-Calergi," Pietro Lombardi's masterpiece, which stands up so nobly facing the Museo Civico. Chief among the beauties of this group is the gorgeous Cà d' Oro, of which we have already spoken, surely the most ornate example of fourteenth-century carving that one could wish to see! Close by, distinguished by the obelisks on the roof, is a building of Saosovino's, where Carlo Rezzonico, afterwards Pope Clement XIII., was born in 1693. Passing San Felice, where for years the British Consulate had its humble seat, we come upon a compact line of buildings similar to the Mocenigo group, but more interesting architecturally, which carries us as far as the Garden of the Vendramin. This palace, called also "Non Nobis Domine," from the inscription it bears on its front, was originally built in 1481 for 200,000 ducats, and passed

successively through various illustrious and less illustrious hands, till in 1844 it was purchased by the Duchesse de Berri, from whom it passed to its present owners. Here Richard Wagner died on February 13, 1883.

The next reach, again, is wonderfully open and varied. It contains no items of commanding historical or architectural interest. We must not, however, fail to mark, as we pass, the Church of SS. Ermagora e Fortunato, whose convenient nickname of "San Marcuola" has already attracted us:[1] there is little to attract about the present eighteenth-century structure, which, however, stands on the site of one of Venice's very earliest churches—built by some of the original refugees from Hunnish violence. According to tradition, Hermagoras was Bishop (appointed by St. Mark) and Fortunatus Archdeacon of the Church of Aquileia in the reign of Nero, and they suffered martyrdom together. When Paulinus, Patriarch of Aquileia, fled to Grado[2] he brought with him, among the treasures of the See, the episcopal thrones of Hermagoras and of St. Mark. The

[1] P. 127.

[2] See p. 185.

latter (perhaps genuine) is still in the Treasury of St. Mark's.

Beyond the broad opening of the broad Cannaregio Canal stands up "the beautifully heterogeneous group of San Geremia, its lofty eighteenth-century campanile, with a modern top, standing sentry over an eighteenth-century church, and flanked by the handsome seventeenth-century Labbia palace." Picturesque variety of a familiar kind follows this group, till we are brought up abruptly, with something of a shock, by the over-ornate façade of the Church of the Bare-footed Friars, or "Scalzi," the iron bridge, and the railway station.

Since the station was built, in the days of Austrian domination, it has more than once brought ill-luck to its ecclesiastical neighbour.

In the bombardment of 1849 the "Scalzi" suffered not a little; and though the luxuriant barocco ornament of its exterior was subsequently restored to its pristine state, it will be a harder task to repair the damage wrought by the same Teutonic foe in 1915.

On the evening of October 24, in the sixth of

GRAND CANAL, SHOWING TOWER OF S. GEREMIA

the Austrian air-raids on Venice (the first, on May 24, followed quickly on the Declaration of War), a bomb struck the roof of the church and brought down the ceiling, and with it the famous Tiepolo fresco of the Miracle of Loreto.

The modern "flying house" is no legend, but a stern reality, and its aim is not blessing but destruction!

CHAPTER IV

FASTS AND FESTIVALS[1]

EARLY in the nineteenth century a great Venetian lady wrote the story of the "Feste Veneziane." Her family had given Doges to the Republic, and she had been bred among the pomps and shows of an age when the city, dead indeed at the heart, yet retained the semblances of freedom. She wrote with sadness; for Napoleon had descended upon Venice—an Attila, as he said, for the oligarchy falsely labelled a Republic—and the ancient festivals had died with the Government which had created them. Yet she knew that her task was no frivolous pastime nor piece of dry antiquarian research; that a gorgeous pattern of ceremony was interwoven with the very fabric of Venetian history, and must

[1] By kind permission of Seeley, Service & Co. this chapter is reprinted (with large additions and a few corrections) from *Things seen in Venice.*

be examined by every student. Thus the word-pictures of Giustina Renier Michiel take their place beside the paintings in which Carpaccio and the Bellini show us the pageantry of their day.

The old order has changed. The close union between Church and State—a remarkable feature in Venetian history—is broken, and civil and ecclesiastical authorities no longer conspire to maintain religion and patriotism by a recurrent series of commemorative festivals. Modern Venice, free once more, but with the larger freedom of United Italy, closes her shops on the day of the *Statuta* and on the famous *Venti Settembre* (September 20); but has not, of course, resumed the festivals which proclaimed her former independence; while many minor ecclesiastical and parochial celebrations have been abolished or curtailed, not by the civic authorities, but by the late Pope Pius X., when Patriarch of Venice, on account of the irreverent disorders they engendered.

But the Venetians still exhibit the fusion of two qualities often opposed in other races and individuals—strong, tender feeling, and a passion for sumptuous display. Therefore they still remain a

festa-loving people, and even now punctuate their calendar with observances new and strange to the northern visitor, and apt to linger in his memory.

Let us begin with a Christmas Eve visit to the fair on the Rialto Bridge, where booths are erected for the purveyance of cheap dainties, cheap finery, cheap articles of daily use—things appealing not to the rich, who can go to the shops in the Merceria, but to the poor, who may have a few pence to spare when the Christmas marketing is done. Sometimes on these stalls the writer has found little pieces of Venetian glass at the lowest of prices. They have some slight flaw—a tiny moulding is chipped, a dragon or sea-horse has come out imperfect from the fire, or a vase, exquisite in shape, does not hold water—so, after brief bargaining, they may be bought for a quarter of the usual retail price.

Lower down in the market there is abundance of provisions and a gay throng of buyers. The stalls where geese, turkeys, and capons are sold are scenes of lively, characteristic chaffering. Flowers from the Riviera are plentiful, and little Christmas-trees are attracting the attention of many a pater-familias. In the early morning hours the vendors

BAMBINO

of fish do a roaring trade, for Christmas Eve is a vigil strictly observed, and by midday the Fish-market is almost depleted.

Towards six in the evening the human tide sets towards St. Mark's, for there, by a unique use, the first Mass of Christmas Day is celebrated about half-past six on Christmas Eve.[1] I say advisedly *about*, for in Venice a great vagueness prevails as to the time of any function, and a given hour is customarily announced with a qualifying *circa* ("about").

This Christmas Mass is one of the most beautiful services of the year. The sole lighting of the nave is the soft radiance streaming from a great suspended cross of beaten iron, the frame of which supports vast numbers of primitive lamps—mere glasses filled with oil in which are floats and wicks; but the High Altar is ablaze with candles, and gleaming with the solid gold of the Pala d' Oro.

The body of the church is packed with standing worshippers of every age and class. Privileged

[1] Doubtless this use dates from an ancient method of beginning the day at the hour of the evening Ave Maria. Half-past six on Christmas Eve would, by this reckoning, be the first hour of Christmas Day. The Venetians continued to use this style of counting till the Napoleonic conquest.

persons and early comers find seats in the chancel facing the altar. The stalls are filled with Canons of St. Mark's in their ermine tippets. The Patriarch is the celebrant. Then from somewhere on high in the dim vault of the dome comes an outburst of song—the thrilling, imperative summons of the "Adeste Fideles." The music usually heard in St. Mark's is not very remarkable, and Venetian voices, affected doubtless by sea-mists and northerly winds, have a very different timbre from the liquid, sonorous tones of southern throats; but the disposition of the singers in a gallery to the left above the chancel, entirely hidden from the nave, joined with the marvellous effects of light and colour in the wonderful building, produce an indescribable impression upon the worshipper on Christmas Eve.

The function ended, the Venetian begins to greet his acquaintance long before he leaves the church. Then he probably takes a turn or two in the Piazza, after which he goes home to sup on a *maigre* soup, a little fish, a vegetable, some *mostarda*, and some almond *nougat*. These latter are his mince-pies and plum-pudding, the dis-

ST. MARK'S BASIN

tinctive *plats* of the Christmas season. *Mostarda* is a delicious apple sauce, sometimes mixed with candied fruits, and always flavoured with warm and pungent spices; the *nougat* is made with honey, and is rather nauseating in its sweetness.

Once upon a time Venetians went a-masking whenever they chose throughout the period of carnival, *i.e.* from Epiphany to Ash Wednesday. A scrap of white satin or black velvet on the face, with a black hood over head and shoulders, abolished all social *convenances*, all class distinctions, and the mask was generally held to be "the finest commodity in the world." Now, save for sporadic bands of children sporting on Sunday in the Piazza, "Sior Maschera" rarely shows himself before Shrove Tuesday. That evening all Venice is abroad, a band plays, and there is often dancing on the Piazza. The crowd is wonderfully good-tempered, quiet, and decorous. Two or three ladies together can walk about in mask and domino without the slightest risk of annoyance; and not a few do so, seeking out their friends, speaking in squeaky, assumed voices, and showing as much acquaintance as possible with their victims'

little weaknesses. Supper parties are held in the restaurants, friends meet and smoke together in the cafés on the Piazza, and about eleven the *Veglione* begins at one of the theatres. Venetian ladies do not as a rule attend this masked ball, unless perhaps a party is made up for a "spree," and then they are rather spectators than dancers.

On the other hand, the Cavalchina—the *bal masqué* held at the Fenice (the Venetian Opera House) on one of the nights of the carnival—is always under patrician patronage. It is for *beneficenza*, the proceeds being divided among the principal charitable institutions of the city. Individuals and trading companies offer prizes for the best costumes; the owners of boxes relinquish their rights in them for the night, and they are resold for fancy prices by the managing committee. The spectacle as viewed from the boxes is very diverting, though greatly marred by the license allowed to male dancers to appear in ugly modern morning dress—not even in *frac*—and to walk about in bowler hats. Such a false note in the spectacle jars the more because of the dainty loveliness of the background. The Fenice cannot

compare in size or magnificence with the Scala at Milan or S. Carlo at Naples, but its unaltered eighteenth-century decorations give it a peculiar *cachet* of its own. Even on an ordinary opera night one feels that powdered heads and patched faces ought to look forth from the boxes, and that when a door opens at the back to admit a visitor, one should catch a glimpse of periwig, cocked hat, and sword. During the carnival of 1907 one was able to realise the aspect of the house in the days of its glory, for, as part of the celebration of the Goldoni Bicentenary, it was decided that fancy dresses at the Cavalchina should all be of the Goldoni period, and that even non-dancers should appear *poudrées.*

Dancers with a box use it as a sort of sitting-out room, into which, however, their masked acquaintances are apt to intrude. Sometimes the visitor uses his disguise to pay off old scores, or as a long-sought means of love-making; sometimes he is recognised amid a chorus of derisive laughter; sometimes he leaves his friends *intrigués* and embarrassed. And always there is an atmosphere of piquant unreality, of utter irresponsibility, and

one experiences again the forgotten sensations of childhood, when it was "such fun to dress up and pretend."

On *Giovedi Grasso,* the Thursday before Lent, a *Pesca di Beneficenza* is held in the Piazza—that is to say, there is a sort of lottery with prizes given by various shops and public-spirited individuals. The proceeds from the sale of tickets are divided among the various charitable institutions. The "fish" caught are of the most diverse species. Bottles of wine, wooden spoons, and small cooking utensils have been won by the writer, who fortunately never became the embarrassed possessor of a cow—sometimes the highest prize of a *pesca.*

A curious modern custom, somewhat at variance with the spirit of the day, is the performance of the band on the Zattere during the afternoon of Ash Wednesday. It is essentially a promenade of the people. One sees whole families—father, mother, children, and children's nurse—walking up and down on the sunny, sheltered *fondamenta,* enjoying the music and watching the shipping; while other listening figures, less prosperous and

THE WOODEN-SPOON SELLER

more picturesque, sprawl contented on the steps of palaces or churches.

The washing of the feet of certain beggars by the Patriarch in St. Mark's is an interesting ceremony on the morning of *Giovedi Santo* (Maundy Thursday), but a far more impressive service is the *Tenebrae*, followed by the *Miserere* and a procession with the relics. Again, as on Christmas Eve, the nave is softly lit by the suspended cross of oil lamps; but now the chancel is in gloom and blackness, and as the solemn chanting continues the only points of light, the tall white altar-candles, are extinguished one by one.

At last out of the gloom comes a strain of passionate contrition, and the tension of mourning breaks like a sob in the appeal of the *Miserere*. Then a procession, sombre and purple, winds through the church and back towards the pulpit to the right of the choir, from which the Patriarch, after the relics have been solemnly exposed, blesses the kneeling worshippers.

In old Venetian days the chief *festa* of the year was unquestionably that of the Ascension. It was then that "the greate Mart or Faire of the

whole year was kept," to quote John Evelyn, who was there in 1645, and found "everybody at liberty and jollie." The "liberty" in fact was that of Carneval.

The theatres, closed since Shrove Tuesday, were reopened for the week of "La Sensa," as the feast was called in the soft Venetian dialect; and certain all-night gaming-houses were much frequented, the players entering masked, and losing, winning, and retiring without speaking a word to reveal their identity. Even the ordinary festal garments of the patricians appeared to Evelyn, unused to the peculiarity and sumptuousness of Venetian costume, like "fancy dress"; and the ladies especially, with their crisped, sun-bleached hair, their black or white transparent veils, their high pattens, or *choppines*, and their wonderful jewels, appeared to him as "always in masquerade." Chiefly, however, was he amazed at "the strange variety of nations" gathered "in the streets and piazzas; Jews, Turks, Armenians, Persians, Moores, Greekes, Sclavonians, some with their targets and boucklers, and all in their native fashions, negotiating in this famous emporium."

The celebrated reply of Venice to the Turks, "Siamo Veneziani, poi Cristiani" ("We are Venetians first, then Christians"), expressed the prevailing attitude of the city; and patriotic pride, not religious devotion, was the *raison d'être* of the Venetian celebration of the Sensa.

It was on Ascension Day that the Doge Pietro Orseolo, at the close of the tenth century, had set sail to attack the fortress of the Corsairs, who had long terrorised the Adriatic. He stormed the city of Lagosta, deemed impregnable; and, returning victorious, declared to the assembled people "how all Istria and the sea coast of the furthest confines of Dalmatia and all the neighbouring islands by the clemency of God and the success of the expedition were made subject to the Venetian dominion" (Sabellico).

Henceforward the feast-day on which the fortunate expedition had set out was dedicated to rejoicing and thanksgiving for the beginning of the city's sea-power. Year after year, in the early morning, when the lagoon is a miracle of beauty, the Doge rowed out in state to the "port of the Lido." There he was joined by the barge of

ecclesiasticals richly dight for high festival, while the shallow waters lapping the low sandy shores were thick with every kind of skiff and *barca*; —for then, as now, at the feast of the Redentore no Venetian who could get into a boat would stay at home. The Bishop, with arms and gaze directed seawards, rose and prayed with a loud voice, "Grant, O Lord, that this sea may be to us and to all who sail upon it tranquil and quiet. To this end we pray; hear us, O Lord." The singers of the ecclesiastical barge began to intone, *Asperges me, Domine*; and the Bishop, having been rowed alongside the ducal ship, sprinkled first its occupants, and then the waves, with holy water.

It was a simple celebration, but there was perhaps a greater reality and dignity about it than belonged to the more elaborate and histrionic ceremony of later days. It was not till 1177, in recognition of the part played by the Republic in the reconciliation of the Papacy and the Empire, that the Pope presented the Doge with a consecrated ring, "as a sign and pledge of the sovereignty which you and your successors possess for ever over this sea." The simple thanksgiving ceremony

was now merged in the elaborate ritual of the *Sposalizio del Mare*—the Espousal of the Sea. The Doge, with a great company of dignitaries in their rich robes of office, went forth in the *Bucintoro*—the great boat rowed by galley slaves, only used on the most solemn occasions. He stopped at the then lovely island of Sant' Elena, where the Bishop of Castello presented him with a bunch of red roses; after which the procession of boats swept seawards and, with due formalities, the Doge cast the consecrated ring into the waves. It was a pageant full of happy symbolism for the Venetians; and the public acknowledgment of the papal sanction of their maritime supremacy undoubtedly served to impress their neighbours, and more especially the numerous foreigners whose presence at the Sensa so materially benefited the commerce and increased the picturesqueness of the "Città nobilissima e singolare."

Only now and then in the course of her history did the concourse in street and Piazza diminish, and shows and diversions fail to produce mirth. Of one such sad Ascension-tide the diarist Sanudo tells us; and we read his words to-day with a

sympathetic comprehension we should not have had before Italy flung herself into the Great War. The League of Cambrai threatened to overwhelm the Republic, and on May 17, 1509, "there was nothing but weeping. No visitors were to be heard of, no one was seen in the Piazza. The Fathers of the College were broken with anxiety, and still more our Doge, who never spoke, but looked like a dead man. . . . Thus these wild days go on. We see our ruin and do nothing to prevent it."

The Doge who looked so deathlike and seemed so inert was Lorenzo Loredan, whose portrait is one of the treasures of our National Gallery, and who, at that time of impending disaster, was seventy-three years old. The imminent danger passed however; and the greatness of Venice passed also. All that remains to-day of the chief of her many *Feste* is that little pageant of the Clock Tower which we have described elsewhere.[1]

The procession of *Corpus Domini* in modern Venice, cannot compare either with its former self, or with similar processions in other parts of

[1] See p. 77.

Italy, notably in Bologna. Its route is curtailed as much as possible, and it barely appears outside the walls of St. Mark's. We must stand before the picture of Gentile Bellini in the Accademia to realise its sometime glory as it traversed the Piazza in the golden June sunshine.

More characteristic is the simple *Corpus Domini* procession at Murano, repeated on the following Sunday; while that at Burano, rarely witnessed by foreigners, is yet more primitive and spontaneous. It takes place late in the afternoon, for these poor fisher-folk cannot afford to keep holiday at an early hour; it makes the tour of the island, and it is composed of almost the entire population.

They are a fine race, these "Buranei" and "Buranelle," and the children are delightful. The trappings of the show may be worn and tawdry, child-angels may be vested in coarse lace curtains, and the little St. John Baptist wear a mangy sheepskin; but the grace of childhood and the sweet dignity of adoring motherhood are as the old Venetian painters saw and fixed them in picture after picture of the Madonna and Child and worshipping *puttini*. And always the atmo-

sphere of the Lagoon plays its tricks of transformation, so that the procession filing across a bridge, or spreading itself into a group about a temporary altar on the line of route, becomes a picture never to be forgotten.

One of the very few processions now allowed to traverse the streets of Venice, takes place on June 13, the day of Sant' Antonio. It forms in the Piazza about 10 A.M., and is composed not only of the patriarchal canons and functionaries of San Marco, but also of the parochial clergy, each wearing a different-coloured stole, which gives the procession a curious striped effect. It passes to the Church of the Salute across a bridge of boats thrown over the Grand Canal, and appears, seen from the surrounding windows, as a streak of glowing colour with banners fluttering in the sea-breeze.

Once again in the year is the Salute approached by a pontoon, and visited in state by the Patriarch, the Canons of St. Mark's, and all the parochi of Venice.

In 1630 the plague, which had raged for sixteen months in Venice and the adjacent islands, was

THE SALUTE AT SUNSET

suddenly arrested; whereupon the Doge, Council, Senate, and nobles and clergy went in solemn procession from St. Mark's to a wooden church hastily erected on a piece of land given to the Republic by the Knights Templars, and there offered the City's solemn thanks given to "Mary the Mother of Health." In due time Baldassare Longhena, who obtained the order in open competition, erected the structure so audacious, yet so strangely graceful, which delights our eyes as we enter the Grand Canal. And year by year, on November 21, Venice renews her thanksgiving, and implores the continued protection of the "Madonna della Salute." Most Venetians—even those "not practising" (*non pratticanti*)—as a rule, visit the church that day; and very early in the morning dwellers in its vicinity are awakened by the tramp, tramp of feet on the wooden structure of the bridge. At the church door the devout purchase tapers, light them, and pass them over the sanctuary rails to the sacristan, till the figure of the Madonna above the high altar is illuminated with thousands of flickering candles. His candle delivered and his prayer said, the average Venetian

pays little further heed to the Low or High Mass at which he is nominally assisting. Presently he will move towards the door, and inspect the booths erected in the big open space round the church, where are sold rosaries and little statuettes of saints and pictures of the Madonna, as well as more mundane goods, such as *galetti* made of flour, lard, and white of egg, candied fruits strung on straws, and other cheap dainties.

The gondoliers of the Traghetto of San Gregorio receive three francs apiece for the day, as compensation for the loss suffered by them by the making of a foot-way across the Canalazzo.

Three times in the year is the canal thus bridged: on June 13, November 21, and the third Sunday of July. On this last occasion, however, the bridge to the Salute is merely an avenue to the far longer pontoon stretched across the wide canal of the Giudecca to the church of the Redentore. This is another votive church, built to commemorate the cessation of another plague.

The *festa*, from 1577 to the present day, has been an immensely popular one. The evening

of the Redentore is talked about—and saved for —months beforehand. There are few families that do not manage to hire a boat, provide a supper, and spend the evening on the water. It is pleasant to see them seated round a table placed in some large old *barca* adorned with lanterns and green boughs, eating a frugal meal and prolonging the enjoyment of their red wine.

The crowd of boats of all descriptions is extraordinary and rather alarming. It is wise to take two gondoliers, and wonderful to watch the dexterity with which they steer their course and avoid accidents. Every one is "on pleasure bent"; and infectious, and, on the whole, harmless hilarity prevails. A band plays on the Giudecca, and fireworks—always entrancing in Venice—are let off at midnight. . . . Then, if the night is fine, the Venetian rows out to the Lido, where he greets the rising sun, and dips in the cool, sun-kissed waves.

In strange contrast to the pageants which, on occasion, lend an added brightness to the Canalazzo, another sort of procession may sometimes be seen crossing it to cut into one or other of the canals which run north-eastwards towards the Fondamente

Nuove. Nothing impresses one with this city's unlikeness to the mainland so much as one of these funerals streaming out towards the island of San Michele, where the dead are laid to rest in the black ooze. Whereas in other places the hearse is melancholy, and the attendant carriages have little about them distinctly funereal, in Venice it is the long train of gondolas with their black felse, rowed by gondoliers in black scarves and sashes, which sounds the note of mourning, while the barque bearing the coffin, which is often heaped with flowers, seems to bound forward almost with an air of triumph. There are three grades of funerals at corresponding prices ; and one could wish that the first-class barque were not adorned with a golden lion of St. Mark weeping into a golden handkerchief. Still, if the decoration is ridiculous, it is not lugubrious, and the passage over the breezy space of the Lagoon in brilliant sunshine, or on one of those grey languid days when rest seems the *summum bonum* of human life, conveys suggestions and impressions far different from those provoked by the slow progress to an English cemetery.

OSMARIN CANAL

But the time intervening between a death and an interment in Venice is peculiarly trying to the relatives of the deceased, especially if they chance to be strangers in the land. Never does the red tape of Italian bureaucracy appear more knotted and obnoxious. Sordid anxieties and irritations start up at every turn, and all kinds of official obstacles hinder the accomplishment of formalities which yet may not be omitted without incurring legal penalties.

Once a year—on November 2—the space of water which, like a sanitary cordon, parts the living from the dead, is spanned by a bridge of boats similar to that which in high summer was constructed over the channel of the Giudecca. All Venice streams across it, for few there are who have no relatives or friends in San Michele, and none who would leave them unvisited on the day dedicated to the departed. As one nears the Fondamente Nuove, a dull beating sound meets the ear, persistent as a torrent, but harsher and more irritating; and when one emerges before the open space of the Lagoon its cause is manifest: it is the sound of hundreds of thickly-shod feet

upon the planks—the march of the living to the dead. Near the entrance to the bridge are booths where flowers and tapers may be purchased, and where little *meringue*-like biscuits called *fave* are sold. They are variously flavoured and gaily coloured, and are the confectioner's substitute for the true beans which should be eaten by every devout Venetian during the period of his *Lemuria.*

Like the Bridge of Sant' Angelo in the Roman Jubilee of 1300, the bridge is divided—half for those who go and half for those who return.[1] It almost makes one dizzy to watch the two black streams flowing in opposite directions. Few of the people make the pilgrimage by water, though now and then I have seen a heavy boat-load of black-shawled women, rowed, perhaps, by a couple of lads. Those who go by gondola must steer for the church that rises white against the black smoke of the Murano furnaces, and must alight at the steps near the steamer pontoon, and rejoin their boat at the landing-stage hard by the temporary bridge. This is the order of the day and is strictly enforced.

After glancing at the dark church where litanies

[1] Dante, *Inferno*, xviii. 28-33.

A SQUERO OR BOAT-BUILDING YARD

are being chanted round a black-draped catafalque, one traverses the cemetery—so different from an English burial-ground—with its cloisters and open squares, filled now with a quiet crowd, every unit of which seeks the resting-place of some loved one.

Out of blurred impressions of *Giorni dei Morti* spent in Venice comes back the vivid recollection of two little lads struggling up a bank with a wreath, bigger than themselves, of pink chrysanthemums. I gave them a helping hand, and they told me that mother was ill and had sent them to lay the wreath on father's grave. They were poorly dressed and looked underfed, and I wondered what the flowers had cost.

There remains with me also as an indelible picture the figure of a young woman with the rare Titian red hair, kneeling in the children's portion of the cemetery beside a little grave. She held an infant in her arms, and clutched it to her heart, as who should say, "I will not let this one go!"

It had been a soft but sunless day; and now the light was waning and the breeze freshening. I saw

her bent, black-shawled figure silhouetted against a saffron streak which separated the steel-grey of the water from the pearl-grey of the sky. And all about her were the pale, flickering flames of tapers burning on the graves—fit emblems of the frailty of human lives.

FRANCESCA

CHAPTER V

THE LAGOON AND ITS ISLANDS

"In the north angle of the Adriatic is a gulf called *Lagune* in which more than sixty islands of sand, marsh, and seaweed have been formed by a concurrence of natural causes. These islands have become the city of Venice. . . ."—DARU.

Quid est mare? Refugium in periculis. This question and answer from one of the quaint manuals which our countryman Alcuin compiled for the instruction of Charles the Great and his family are appropriately chosen by the author of *Life on the Lagoons* as motto for one of his books. Had Alcuin actually in his mind the story of the founding of Venice? It would hardly be an obvious definition or description of the function of the sea in human life: "a refuge in perils!" To the Hebrew the sea is the cruel, intractable divider; one of the features of the heavenly life is its disappearance—"There shall be no more sea." To the

Phœnicians it was a highway for commerce. To the northern peoples, both before, and still more after Alcuin's day, it was a path to glory and plunder. The long boats of the Vikings, like the airships of our modern times, could laugh at our island's rampart of green water. But at the head of the Adriatic the waters became in the middle of the fifth century and for long afterwards a veritable *refugium in periculis.* For it was not to the open sea that they betook themselves, those victims of Attila and his Huns, but to the Lagoon, with its fringe of marshes, with its treacherous shallows intersected by elusive channels: a refuge alike from assaults threatening from the mainland and from the attacks of man or of Nature from the direction of the Adriatic.

The assaults of Nature, as well as those of man: for the long and almost continuous barrier known as the Lido—the fringe of solid ground formed by the union of the alluvial contributions of the rivers of the Veneto with the sand cast up by the Adriatic storms—renders those storms impotent to overwhelm whatsoever lies within the barrier; while the tide of salt water which ebbs and flows un-

MIDDAY ON THE LAGOON

failingly through the openings that break the line of the Lido acts as scavenger, and renders modern Venice a healthy place, in spite of its situation among marshes. Such words as these were used of Ravenna by Strabo[1] in the time of Augustus. His description, indeed, of Augustus' naval base, built in the marshes, upon wooden piles, and traversed by means of bridges and ferries, has been aptly quoted as a remarkable parallel to Venice. But Ravenna inverted, as it were, the sequence of Venetian history. It was first an important naval base, commanding in the name of imperial Rome the waters of the Adriatic; later, when its lagoon became a marsh, and its port an inland village, it played the rôle of *refugium in periculis* for a degenerate imperial court. Venice, on the other hand, was first a place of refuge, and afterwards a centre of sea-power, Queen of the Adriatic and controller of the world's ship-borne trade.

As a refuge we first hear of it in 452. The year after his historic defeat at Châlons—the "first Battle of the Marne"—and a year before his death,

[1] See F. C. Hodgson, *Early History of Venice*, Allen, 1901; this and the same writer's *Venice in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* are most valuable.

Attila and his merciless army descended upon north Italy.

The flourishing Roman settlements of Altinum, Concordia, and Aquileia — the first just at the northernmost point of the Lagoon in which Venice lies, the last hard by Monfalcone of more recent fame—felt the full force of the storm ; and as from the modern Huns vast bands of Flemish refugees have sought safety by crossing the Channel, so the survivors of those Roman colonies hastened to put the marshes and the Lagoon between them and the pitiless ravagers acclaimed as prototype by a modern militarist Power.

Many of these original refugees probably returned to the mainland when the "tyranny was overpast" ; but similar troubles in later centuries drove others from the same neighbourhood to seek refuge in an amphibious life. In the middle of the fifth century the Lombard invasions led to a permanent colonising of several of the islands of the Venetian Archipelago. Torcello in the far north of the Lagoon, Mazzorbo, Burano, and Murano still bear, it is said in their names, reminiscences of the destroyed city of Altinum : Torcello

CHIOGGIA

named after its fair and stately tower, and the others after its gates. At the same time two islands north-east of Torcello, off the mouth of the Piave, were colonised by refugees from Feltre and Oderzo, and named Heraclea and Equilium (Jesolo).

When the inhabitants of the Lagoon first organised themselves under a common government, its seat was at Heraclea. Its ecclesiastical centre was many miles farther east, outside the circle of the Venetian Lagoon, at Grado, the port of Aquileia, whither the Aquileian Patriarch Paulinus fled, bringing with him priceless relics and treasures when Alboin the Lombard destroyed that city for the second time. And it was not till several centuries after the seat of government had been transferred to the more central position of Rialto that the ecclesiastical See was brought to the adjacent island of Olivolo, as San Pietro di Castello.

This is the Venice that we know, in the centre of the great Lagoon, clustering on either side of the winding Canalazzo, which represents, as is thought, the course of an original Rivoaltus river, a tributary of the Brenta, which parted company again after a

brief union with the latter. It is made of a different stuff from the islands of which we have just spoken. Torcello and the rest, like the Lido itself, have a solid foundation to offer to the builder; here one must drive innumerable piles into the mud banks, and lay on the piles huge blocks of Istrian stone before a magnificent city can spring up.

The first settlers on these mud banks, Paduan refugees, it is said, fleeing from Attila and his Huns, will have found a few fishermen and fowlers already plying their trade, sheltered in rude huts on wattled and piled foundations. As late as the fifteenth century, says Molmenti, there were still thatched wooden houses standing near the Rialto, built on platforms of larch-wood; and though already in the ninth century, when the seat of government was moved thither from Malamocco, the richer inhabitants began to imitate the fashion of Torcello and build in stone, it was not till the end of the fifteenth century that the use of driven-in piles for foundation became common.

In these earlier stone buildings materials were employed which had been brought from the main-

AT CHIOGGIA

land; and the writer just quoted records that "among the ruins of the campanile which fell on July 14, 1902, bricks of Roman make were discovered. They probably came from Aquileia. Some of them were very firm in grain, and bore the imperial mark of Antoninus Pius." After the early days of conflict between the different communities that had sought refuge within the Lagoon and on its eastern fringe, a struggle in which first Heraclea and then Malamocco became dominant, this central city of Rialto rose to pre-eminence, "as a monument of Pepin's attack and defeat."

When a new Western Empire came into being under Charles the Great, the Venetian community, already, by force of circumstances, growing in sea-power, became something of a bone of contention between the old Empire on the Bosphorus and the new one on the Rhine. The romance and mystery of the "Roman" kingship of Byzantium always attracted and impressed Venice more strongly than any Western power, whether Gothic, Lombardic, Frankish, or Papal.

In the early years of the ninth century she had been markedly coquetting with Byzantium, and

in consequence suffered an attack at the hands of Pepin, son of Charles, in 809. The Frank made himself master of Grado and of some of the Lido settlements, but was stale-mated at Malamocco by the Venetians, who had taken the precaution of blocking up the entrances to the Lagoon and removing the buoys that then marked its channels. In 813 Charles solemnly renounced all claim to Venetia in favour of Byzantium; but though the immediate danger of Frankish assault was thus removed, the exposed position of Malamocco became apparent, and the Venetians, in 813, decided to remove the seat of government to the Rialto, and Angelo Participazio took up his ducal residence on the spot where ever since the "Doge's Palace" has stood. This is the first great step in the evolution of that Venetian Republic, whose rise, greatness, wane, and fall occupy the next thousand years.

From the second decade of the ninth century to the end of the eleventh, Venice was engaged intermittently in a life-and-death struggle for supremacy in the Adriatic against Slavonian pirates —a struggle by which she achieved, under Pietro

Orseolo II., that conquest of Dalmatia which meant so much to her, and which she commemorated year by year on Ascension Day (see p. 167)—then against the Saracens established in Sicily (with whom, however, her crafty merchants were not above trafficking occasionally in Christian slaves and in contraband of war); and finally with the Norman conquerors of those Saracens.

In these conflicts she developed her fighting muscle, and in the last two of them she laid the Byzantine Empire under deep obligation, and won trading privileges at Constantinople which formed a basis for her world-wide commercial predominance. Heiress of the almost prehistoric export trade of the mainland cities at the head of the Adriatic, in amber, and furs, and wine, she now became for all the West the great emporium of Oriental merchandise: first sharing, then making her own, those Eastern sources of wealth which had for centuries past enriched the imperial city.

During the next 250 years, from the end of the eleventh century, the Crusades offered Venice a chance of expanding both her commerce and her territory—a chance which she was not slow to

take. Her Doge, Enrico Dandolo, was the real leader in the expedition styled the "Fourth Crusade," which in 1204 captured Constantinople from the Greeks, and set up the Latin Empire. As her share of the spoils, Venice acquired many islands, including Cyprus and Crete, and important strips of mainland territory, which became outposts for her future wars against the Turks.

Together, Venice and Genoa—her great rival in maritime emprise—might have kept the Moslem in check, or cast him out of Europe, saving her from centuries of oppression and woe; but before the great struggle with the Turk came on, these two foremost naval powers were locked in a death-grip from which Venice issued weakened though victorious, and Genoa never recovered.

The age-long jealousy of Genoa, intensified by the fact that Venice secured the lion's share of spoils at the sack of Constantinople, burst out into a flame of war which raged from 1350 to 1380. The final phase of this conflict is the famous "War of Chioggia," one of the most dramatic scenes in all Venetian history, when the disgraced and imprisoned Vettor Pisani was released just in

IN A SIDE STREET, CHIOGGIA

time to save his country from destruction, and the besieging Genoese found themselves in turn besieged in Chioggia, where they had established themselves on the hither side of the Lido, and whence they tried in vain to escape by digging a canal for their ships through the sand-barrier into the Adriatic.

When in 1453 the Moslems besieged Constantinople, Venice rendered no aid save in the person of a few volunteers, but in the next century she followed on sea the brave example set by Hungary and Poland on land, and became the champion of European civilisation against the Turk. Close on the tragic loss of Cyprus, she won the ever-famous victory of Lepanto, thus giving the Turks their first maritime check; she carried on for more than twenty years (1645–69) the defence of Crete; and as late as 1684, under the leadership of the great Francesco Morosini, conquered the whole of the Peloponnesus, which she retained till 1715.

The Lagoon, which was to be the nursery of the greatest maritime power of the Middle Ages, is some thirty miles long north and south, and from one to ten miles broad. The extent of the

water has been estimated at 160 geographical miles. The Lido consists of a trail of solid sand-spits, formerly clad with pine woods, like the *Pineta* of Classe at Ravenna, now for the most part bare, save for human habitations at Tre Porti, on the Lido proper, at Alberoni, Pelestrina, and Chioggia. "The Lido" is just a fashionable watering-place of the most modern type: the other places named are picturesque fishing villages, unspoilt and well worth a visit. Westwards of this Lido barrier is the Lagoon, with its archipelago of islands: first the "Laguna viva," kept alive by the indefatigable tides of the Adriatic, then, nearer in-shore, the "Laguna morta," semi-stagnant salt marshes, of which one catches a glimpse in the train soon after leaving Mestre. The Live Lagoon is dotted with islands north and south of the central group. The northern ones we have already spoken of in part; but besides Murano, Burano, and Torcello we should note the nearer island of San Michele, now the cemetery, and the lonely but lovely San Francesco del Diserto away to the north-east of this. Murano, now again as of old the centre of the glass industry, is notable also for its glorious

THE ORANGE SAIL

Church of SS. Maria and Donato, and for Bellini's fine picture in the other church. Burano—"Boreana"—recalls the name of the northern Gate of Altinum, as the neighbouring Mazzorbo—"Majorbium"—its Porta Major. Torcello the most fascinating and the most pathetic of all the islands. Here the architectural interest is distributed between the quaint Church of Santa Fosca and the more famous Cathedral. The latter, rebuilt in its old form in 1008 by the son of Doge Pietro Orseolo II., the hero of Dalmatia, is a typical early Christian Basilica, with its choir uplifted above a crypt (as in San Miniato at Florence), with a primitive semicircle of Presbyters' seats, supporting a central Bishop's throne. Above them the calm, far-gazing Byzantine figures of Our Lady and the Apostles breathe out of their mosaic a breath of the East and of eternity. From its Lombardic *campanile* —counterpart of that "fair and stately tower" of Altinum from which the whole island derives its name—may be seen the view so strikingly described by Ruskin in his *Stones of Venice*: "Far as the eye can reach, a waste of wild sea-moor, of a lurid ashen grey; not like our Northern moors, with their

jet-black pools and purple heath, but lifeless, the colour of sackcloth. . . . No gathering of fantastic mists, nor coursing of clouds across it; but melancholy clearness of space in the warm sunset, oppressive, reaching to the horizon of its level gloom. To the very horizon on the north-east; but to the north and west there is a blue line of higher land along the border of it, and above this, but further back, a misty band of mountains, touched with snow. To the east, the paleness and roar of the Adriatic, . . . to the south, the widening branches of the calm Lagoon, alternately purple and pale green. . . . Beyond the widening branches of the Lagoon, and rising out of the bright lake into which they gather, there are a multitude of towers, dark, and scattered among square-set shapes of clustered palaces, a long irregular line fretting the southern sky. Mother and daughter, you behold them both in their widowhood — Torcello and Venice."

Southwards from the central group stretches a trail of smaller islands, among which we may count San Giorgio Maggiore, then San Lazzaro, once a Leper Island, now the abode of the genial

CHIOGGIA

Armenian (Uniat) Fathers, Lazzeretto Vecchio and Nuovo (a corruption of "Santa Maria in Nazareth"), San Servolo, dedicated from very ancient times to a local Adriatic saint Servulus, and Poveglia, originally *Pupilia*, frequented in the eighteenth century for the sake of a Miraculous Crucifix in its church: more singular in respect of a custom dating from the middle of the ninth century, by which the *Gastaldo* of the island used annually to come to the Ducal Palace to receive a kiss of peace from the reigning Doge.

Other islands are scattered landwards of the main group, of which the most interesting is San Giorgio in Alga, with its neighbouring islet Sant' Angelo di Concordia. When the seventeenth-century guide, the *Forestiere Illuminato*, was compiled each of these islands had its monastery and its church, or churches. What a chorus of prayer and praise must have risen to Heaven from its wide expanse! Venice might then have taken for her motto the opening words of Psalm xcvii.: DOMINUS REGNAVIT, EXSULTET TERRA: LAETENTUR INSULAE MULTAE—"The multitude of the isles may be glad thereof."

Before we leave the Lagoon, that miracle of loveliness and utility, the superb setting of the jewel Venice, and its subtle defence against all foes, human and elemental, two points claim a little further attention: the Lido, Venice's natural rampart, and the Gondola, her unique means of luxurious transport, the "Swan of the Lagoon." He who would study either of these subjects at once with pleasure and with security that what he reads is written by one who knows, must turn to the delightful pages of Mr. Horatio Brown's *Life on the Lagoons*, where the whole mystery of the effect of tide and current, of channel and shallow, of the co-operation and strife of Piave and Brenta and Adriatic, skilfully guided and modified by the hand of man, is unravelled by a master-hand; and where the gradual evolution of the gondola from the light skiff which Cassiodorus, secretary of Theodoric, found tethered to the rude Venetian dwellings of the sixth century is charmingly drawn out by one whose gondolier has been his intimate, and who is himself no unskilful hand at the oar. From him you will learn how there go up to the making of a complete

BY A SQUERO OR BOAT-BUILDING YARD

gondola three metals—iron, steel, and brass—and no less than five kinds of wood—walnut, cherry, elm, pine, and oak. The stages in the development of the modern gondola from the primitive *barchetta* of Cassiodorus's day are some of them clearly marked in art and literature. The early sixteenth-century gondola depicted by Bellini and Carpaccio is already far advanced, but it lacks the "Ferro," the picturesque "Swan's beak" without which the boat would lose half its dignity and charm. But Evelyn's description shows that by the middle of the seventeenth century this want had already been supplied. "These vessels," he says, "are built very long and narrow, having necks and tailes of steele, somewhat spreading at the beake like a fishe's taile, and kept so exceedingly polish'd as to give a great lustre; some are adorn'd with carving, others lined with velvet (commonly black), with curtains and tassells, and the seates like couches, to lie stretch'd on, while he who rowes stands upright on the very edge of the boate, and with one oare bending forward as if he would fall into the Sea, rowes and turns with incredible dexterity; thus passing from channell

to channell, landing his fare or patron at what house he pleases. The beakes of these vessells are like the ancient Roman rostrums."

Like the Ferro, the Felze is the outcome of a long historical development. In Evelyn's description it would hardly be recognisable, save for the mention of "curtains": this cosy little walnut-wood erection, which Mr. Horatio Brown describes as a "little house in which the passenger sits, secure from rain and wind," and which he characterises as "the most expensive item in a gondola." The attitude of the gondolier when at work, which surprised and almost alarmed John Evelyn, is not one of stupid bravado or melodramatic display; it is the one scientific method of propelling this unique vessel. If we may quote what we have written elsewhere:[1] "The boat is without helm; it is to be guided and propelled by a single oar, and that in face of wind and tide; it must be ready to respond to the slightest motion of the oarsman, to advance in a straight line, to negotiate any angle, to spin round, if required, on its own axis. It is built with a perceptible list to one side, to balance the

[1] *Things seen in Venice* (Seeley, Service & Co., 1912), p. 183.

CHIOGGIA FISH MARKET

weight of him who stands on its poop, and to counteract the bias of his one oar's impetus it is built with one side longer and more curved than the other."

Of the three factors which have operated in the formation of the Lagoon—the rivers (Brenta, Sile, and Piave), the Lidi, and the Adriatic, Mr. Brown regards the Lidi as the most important. We have already spoken of the function of these long sandy spits in warding off from Venice the otherwise overwhelming inrush of the Adriatic. "If the Scirocco should chance to blow," says our author, "you will hear borne high up in the air the boom of the waves breaking on the Lido shore; should that sandbank once give way, the impetuous seas would come rolling in upon the city, sweeping its palaces and churches down to a watery destruction, such as the imagination of Tintoret has pictured on his canvas at Santa Maria dell' Orto." Again, we have seen how in the time of Charlemagne and Pepin this natural barrier formed a sure defence against the assaults of human foes. We have seen how in the War of Chioggia it played the same rôle of

faithful defender, resisting the efforts of the desperate Genoese to "hack their way through" to the waters of the Adriatic. But beyond the obvious barrier of the Lido is an invisible line of defence which it has conspired with the Adriatic to produce. The five openings, or "porti,"—practically reduced to four by human art,—by which a hostile ship might enter the Lagoon, are masked by hidden sandbanks, each with a southward trend: banks which are formed and kept in being by the ceaseless play of the Adriatic current, which swirls ever southward towards Brondolo and the Italian shore, struggling with the tide-streams which force their way out through the openings twice in every twenty-four hours.

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